

Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Should the Legislature override the governor's veto of the Fiscal Year 2009 budget?

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I N S I D E



Pastor Shot

A pastor shot during his sermon deflected the first of the gunman's four rounds with a Bible.

NATION...Page 14



Broiled Alive

"Death by hyperthermia" is the official designation. The reality is even more horrifying—and heart-breaking.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

Autopsy confirms Omisong's death a homicide. **PAGE 3**
Legislature OKs lease deal for \$300M Tinian casino. **PAGE 7**

'Amnesty for overstayers with unpaid labor awards'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

A group of foreign workers is asking the federal and local government to consider giving amnesty to overstayers who have not been paid their wages and other claims despite the awards granted them by the CNMI Department of Labor.

See **AMNESTY** on Page 4

Aedan's back after marrow transplant



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Four-year-old Aedan Gregory Sablan Duldalao.

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Four-year-old Aedan Gregory Sablan Duldalao is back on Saipan and is doing "amazingly well" after a successful bone-marrow transplant in Arizona.

Audrey Jo Sablan, in an e-mail to *Saipan Tribune*, said she and her husband, Mario Duldalao, hugged, cried,

See **AEDAN** on Page 4

ART EXHIBIT

Artist Xiao Ping or Michelle Chen talks about one of her oil paintings that are on exhibit at the Phoenix Art Gallery in Gapan to raise international awareness about the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China. An opening reception was held Monday night for the one-month exhibit titled, "Truth, Compassion, Tolerance," which coincided with the opening of Xiao Peng's Phoenix Gallery that also features her island-themed artwork.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

CUC CONSULTANT RECOMMENDS:

135 pct, 289 pct rate hike proposed for water, sewer

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Georgetown Consulting Group Inc. has proposed a provisional rate increase of 135 percent for water and 289 percent for wastewater services in order to meet the requirements of local law and the federal government's stipulated order for the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

See **CUC** on Page 4

Utility Bill Comparisons - Water and Wastewater (Impact of Compliance w/ Federal Stipulated Order & PL 16-17)

RESIDENTIAL CLASS	WATER BILLING 10k Gal	WASTEWATER BILLING 10k Gal	COMBINED BILLING Total
Current CUC Rate	\$25.80	\$5.50	\$31.30
50% Provisional Rate	\$43.23	\$13.44	\$56.67
75% Provisional Rate	\$51.92	\$17.40	\$69.32
Full Provisional Rate	\$60.63	\$21.40	\$82.03

FAA removes CPA from 'high risk' status

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Federal Aviation Agency has removed the Commonwealth Ports Authority from "high-risk" status to "moderate risk" after the agency partially addressed concerns raised in previous years' audit reports.

See **FAA** on Page 4



Local

Legislative group formed to review stimulus projects

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

An 11-member legislative group has been formed to review all infrastructure projects

approved by the Fitial administration in connection with the over \$338.5 million in CNMI projects that could be covered under the \$787 billion national stimulus package.

The Joint Legislative Federal Recovery Act Committee has been formed to serve as the Legislature's liaison with the Department of Commerce on all infrastructure projects being submitted for funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The committee will review the projects and make recommendations to the Legislature regarding any action that may be required.

The members consist of four senators, three House members, their counsels and legislative assistants.

In the Senate, the members are: Sen. Maria Frica T. Pangelinan, chairperson; Sen. Paul A. Manglona, Sen. Felix Mendiola; Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider; Senate legal counsel Michael Ernest; and Senate legislative assistant Eric Lister.

The House members involved in the group are: Rep. Ray N. Yumul, chairperson; Rep. Ramon A. Tebuteb; Rep. Francisco S. Dela Cruz; House legal counsel Jeffrey Warfield; and House legislative assistant Melchor Mendiola.

The committee has 10 days to comment on each submission or give its approval.

"We expect that the committee will rise to the challenge presented by this one-time opportunity for a badly needed infusion of funds into our ailing economy. Given the time constraints and the needs of the involved agencies and the federal government, the Legislature must stand ready to do our part in a timely fashion," said Senate Pres. Pete P. Reyes and Speaker Arnold I. Palacios in a letter to members.

Commerce Secretary Michael Ada said they have identified \$338.5 million in projects

that could be covered, including power, water, wastewater and solid waste projects.

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act signed into law in February, the CNMI is eligible for infrastructure funding in addition to individual tax credits residents will receive.

But because the insular areas were unsuccessful in their attempt to allow the Interior Department to distribute their portion, the CNMI must apply and compete against other local governments for the competitive grant money. The CNMI will also receive a set amount of non-competitive formula grant money.

Woman arrested for allegedly choking daughter, 11

Police arrested a woman for allegedly choking her 11-year-old daughter and hitting her with a belt at their residence in Gapan on Saturday.

Terry Ann M. Pangelinan, 26, was arrested for alleged child abuse, and assault and battery.

The girl sustained bruises in the arms, legs, ears, and neck. She was taken to the Commonwealth Health Center.

Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona

earlier imposed a \$6,000 cash bail for Pangelinan's temporary liberty.

The defendant was taken before associate judge Kenneth Govendo yesterday for a bail hearing.

Detective Adrea C. Ozawa stated in her report that it was Pangelinan's former common-law husband who went to the Department of Public Safety Sat-

urday night to report the incident.

Ozawa said the former common-law husband sought police's help because he believed Pangelinan had choked their daughter.

When a police officer responded to the house, he observed red marks on the girl's neck. Pangelinan told the officer that nothing had happened.

The girl, however, cried and

told the officer that her mother beat her up when she talked to her father on the phone.

Pangelinan allegedly spanked her with a belt, pulled her by her hair, slammed her on the bed, then choked and punched her.

Pangelinan then grabbed the phone from the girl and told her former common-law husband that she was choking their daughter. *(Ferdie dela Torre)*

Fitial: Timely budget proposal for FY 2010

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, who vetoed the Fiscal Year 2009 budget bill on Feb. 10, said a timely budget proposal for FY 2010 will be forwarded to the Legislature by April 1, 2009.

Fitial informed Speaker Arnold I. Palacios and Senate Pres. Pete P. Reyes that all agencies and departments "have been working diligently" for several weeks now to submit their

budget proposals for FY 2010, which begins on Oct. 1, 2009.

The governor's communication came the same day the House failed to override his \$156.76 million budget for FY 2009 on Wednesday. The House managed to get only 12 votes instead of 14 to override the budget veto.

The last time the CNMI had a budget bill signed into law was in 2006, when Fitial first came into office.

In the absence of a budget law, the CNMI government

continues to operate under continuing appropriation.

Rep. Ray Yumul, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said he's now waiting for the governor's proposed budget for FY 2010 on or before April 1.

By July 1, the Legislature sets limits on expenditures by passing a House Concurrent Resolution. By Sept. 1, the Legislature completes action by introducing and passing a budget bill setting the annual appropriation.

Deleon Guerrero to run again for House

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After losing only by three votes in the 2007 elections, Fredrick P. Deleon Guerrero yesterday said he will run again as Precinct 5 member of the House of Representatives in the November polls.

Deleon Guerrero will run as an independent candidate.

"A lot of the feedback I get from the community is that we need change in government. I think I can assist in making that change," he said.

His focus will be in improving education services, along with protecting the Retirement Fund and enhancing the economy.

When he lost by three votes in 2007 to Rep. Edward Salas, Deleon Guerrero did not request for a recount. "I respect the peoples' votes," he said. At that time, there were nine who



Fredrick P. Deleon Guerrero, left, will run as Precinct 5 candidate for the House of Representatives. Also in photo is House Floor Leader Joseph Camacho.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

ran for two available seats in the precinct.

House Floor Leader Joseph Camacho said he supports Deleon Guerrero's candidacy because of his hard work, dedication and experience. He said Deleon Guerrero is also a choir member and PTA president at Chacha Oceanview Junior High School.

Deleon Guerrero, who was Camacho's campaign chairman in 2007, earned his bachelor's degree in American Studies at

the University of New England in Maine.

He now works as a legislative aide at the Legislative Bureau. He was a former insurance administrator, a teacher at Kagman High School, and a former staffer of former U.S. Sen. Olympia Snowe of Maine.

Deleon Guerrero, who is married for 20 years to his number one supporter, Maecy Reyes Deleon Guerrero, is father to three children, all students in Kagman.



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SAIPAN SEAPORT PROJECT NO. CPA-SS-001-09 REQUEST FOR INTEREST

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is requesting the attendance of all interested parties for certain renovation and replacement works to the seawater fire fighting piping system, to the CPA Seaport Administration Building, Ferry Ticket Booth and the pier area on the Island of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held for this project at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, March 16, 2009 in Saipan at the CPA Port of Saipan Conference Room on the second floor. Prospective proposers are required to attend. All questions prior to the pre-proposal conference must be submitted in writing to Mr. Efrain F. Camacho, PE, CPA's Executive Director, faxed to (670) 234-5962 or emailed to cpa.admin@pticom.com. A scope of work will then be designed to form the basis for all proposals.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

/s/ MR. EFRAIN F. CAMACHO, P.E.
Executive Director/Contracting Officer

Date: March 9, 2009



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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES

SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT GENERATOR BUILDING RENOVATIONS PROJECT NO. CPA-SA-005-09

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting statements of professional qualifications from interested firms for Architectural/Engineering (A/E) Design Services.

The general scope of work is for A/E design services for renovations and improvements to the generator building at the Saipan International Airport, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands. These improvements consist of, but are not limited to replacement of doors and door frames, facility hardware, louver motors, air-conditioning units, renovations to living quarters and roof repairs.

At a minimum, the statements of professional qualification from firms should address the areas generally described below:

1. Overall A/E design experience in the Pacific area and especially in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands;
2. A/E Design experience related to CPA projects;
3. Level of proficiency in performing A/E services promptly; and level of experience;
4. The general reputation of the firm in terms of quality of A/E work experience and services performed for AIP projects, and the firm's professional integrity and competence; and
5. Resumes of key personnel including current licenses and registrations of principal, if applicable.

Interested firms must submit one (1) original and four (4) copies each of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **4:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 10, 2009.**

Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330. Only firms who have established an office in the Commonwealth and a valid business license will be considered.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

Send information to: Mr. Efrain F. Camacho, PE
Executive Director/Contracting Officer
Commonwealth Ports Authority
P.O. Box 501055
Saipan, MP 96950-1055

/s/ MR. EFRAIN F. CAMACHO
Executive Director/Contracting Officer

Date: February 24, 2009

Autopsy confirms Omisong's death a homicide

Dr. Espinola says victim sustained hard blow on the head

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

An autopsy has confirmed that the Palauan man who fell into a coma and later died was assaulted, according to the Department of Public Safety yesterday.

Based on the autopsy conducted Friday night, Guam chief medical examiner Dr. Aurelio Espinola determined that the bruising on the left side of Ligardo N. Omisong's face was consistent with a hard blow or punch, said DPS spokesperson Lei Ogomoro.

Espinola also established that the injury on the back of Omisong's head was also consistent with the victim falling on a hard surface.

Espinola concluded that the cause of death was due to subdural hematoma with brain

contusion.

"As of present time, investigators are still conducting their investigation into the case," Ogomoro said.

The NMI Crime Stoppers Program is offering up to \$1,000 cash reward to anyone who can give

information leading to an arrest.

According to a police report, the 44-year-old Omisong was found lying on his back on the main road in front of Leo Poker in San Jose early morning of Feb. 27.

The victim was taken to the Commonwealth Health Center where he was in a coma for major head injuries. Last Thurs-

day—six days after the attack—the victim passed away.

As of yesterday, no suspect was arrested yet.

A witness told responding police officers that he heard screams from outside his home and when he checked, he saw the victim lying unresponsive on the roadway.

The witness saw two men running north.

Omisong's death is the first homicide case in the CNMI this year.

CUC consultant: Reduce fuel rate by 16 percent

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Georgetown Consulting Group has recommended that the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. reduce by 16 percent the existing levelized energy cost clause, or LEAC, to reflect the fall in world oil prices.

In a seven-page report submitted by the consulting company to the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission on Friday, the firm recommended that the current \$0.22989 per kilowatt-hour rate be decreased to \$0.19327 per kWh starting April 1, 2009.

Georgetown Consulting said this would result in about 12-percent overall decrease in a typical month's overall electric bill for residential customers.

"The price of fuel oil is the primary factor contributing to this recommended decrease. We have estimated the price of fuel oil for the upcoming six months based upon the average pricing contracts for No. 2 oil," the report said, adding that the current estimate is approximately

\$0.15/gallon lower than the fuel price forecast used in the development of the January 1-March 2009 LEAC rate.

Other than the price of fuel oil, LEAC also loosely considers the efficiency of the generating units and the level of losses. This, it said, will become a more important factor as CUC completes its rehabilitation project and brings back into operation more efficient generating units.

CUC earlier announced that it would no longer renew its \$6-million contract with Aggreko this September because by then the island will already have enough supply of power.

Georgetown Consulting also suggested that the LEAC rate of \$0.19327 per kWh, which is supposed to be implemented until September 2009, be composed of the following:

■ \$0.14912 per kWh for CUC fuel oil costs, generation, lubricant costs, transportation and handling costs, taxes and other associated costs as billed by the fuel supplier;

■ \$0.01574 per kWh for fund to purchase over an 18-month

period of a 30-day fuel inventory as well as provide for variations from projected fuel prices that result in unrecovered cost;

■ \$0.00285 per kWh to fund CPUC invoices for regulatory fees and expenses and for the procurement or employment of financial and technical exper-

tise; and

■ \$0.02556 per kWh to fund a reserve to support PUC's approved power generation measures, which CUC can establish by petition and which would increase the availability, efficiency and reliability of its generating units, thereby

reducing fuel costs.

It was agreed in the Dec. 12, 2008, LEAC stipulation that the LEAC rate and resulting tariff would be determined on the basis of a transparent regulatory process. This would allow PUC the opportunity to reduce fuel expenses and eliminate unreasonable expenses.

Georgetown Consulting said

that at present, the LEAC protocol is very basic and focuses primarily on key variables such as sales, fuel, use, fuel pricing, regulatory costs, and capital for efficiency improvements.

Left out of the equation are issues such as losses, a true-up mechanism, station use, individual unit production costs, and efficiency as well as fuel use.

2 Immigration officers quit posts

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Two Immigration officers recently resigned from the already understaffed CNMI Division of Immigration, according to its director, Melvin Grey.

"I lost two this month. Two people quit this month. I know there are others that are looking [for new jobs]," Grey told *Saipan Tribune*.

He said one of those who resigned is still on the island, while the other went to the U.S. mainland.

The official said one was an Immigration officer for about a year, while the second had already been with local Immigration for a couple of years.

Grey said their office has been understaffed from the beginning, but their numbers keep going down.

"We get some temporary appointments. We can't do permanent hires. And people uncertain of their future, no matter if they are recent hires or got 15 or 20 years in, everybody is looking at what's going to happen on June 1st," he pointed out.

Grey earlier stated that the morale of the local Immigration staff is down because they are

scheduled to be out of jobs by June 1 when the federal government takes over the division.

"It's not like they are hoping [to get absorbed]. It's like we're out of jobs June 1st. So they are really hurting...what's their recourse? They are U.S. citizens working in their own country and the federal government put them out of jobs," he said.

The U.S. Customs and Border Protection had already posted job announcements for Customs and Border Protection Officer Field Operations, listing the CNMI as a duty location.

Thirty-seven CNMI Immigration employees will reportedly be automatically eliminated from consideration because of the 37-year-old age cutoff.

Because of such hiring qualification criteria, less than 20 local immigration officers may qualify.

As of December, the CNMI had 72 Immigration employees, including three at the U.S. Passport's Office.

The Legislature has passed a joint resolution asking the U.S. Department Homeland Security to ensure that local Immigration employees and U.S. citizens in the CNMI be given priority when hiring in the CNMI.

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Fijian soldier wins top honor for gallantry

Jone Toge rescued Afghan soldiers under enemy fire

SUVA, Fiji (Fiji Times/PIR)—The British Army has awarded its prestigious and rare Conspicuous Gallantry Cross to a Fijian soldier for his bravery.

Jone Toge, 27, of Pacific Harbor, who is a Lieutenant Corporal in the Royal Irish Regiment, was awarded the medal for saving his comrades in Afghanistan.

Yesterday, his father, Jone Toge said his son called him in the morning and told him about his bravery award.

"I am so proud of him. I have four sons and they are all in the British Army and I am a former Fiji military officer," said Toge.

Toge it was the proudest moment in his life when his son joined the regiment in 2007.

"My son told me that the actual awards ceremony would be done by the Queen and she would be handing them their bravery medals," he said.

According to the *Daily Mail*, L/Cpl Jone Toge took command of his mentoring team after his commander took ill and rescued four Afghan Army soldiers under enemy fire. This after their armored vehicle was hit by rocket propelled grenade fire.

He and his team and Afghan soldiers were approaching a village when they came under fire and were ordered by SAS soldiers operating in the area to take and hold a piece of high ground overlooking the village. But as they advanced the Taliban struck and the Afghans were wounded.

"They were lying out there screaming. The vehicle had been hit by three or four RPGs and a hail of automatic fire. We were out in the open with no cover and I told the ANA to keep on fighting," he told the *Daily Mail*.

"At first I was stunned by the explosions, but I called the Afghan medic and we crawled out to the wounded guys. I got three of them back into some sort of cover and he got the other one.

"Then I called up another armored vehicle and we managed to heave the wounded into that and when they were taken away we moved forward and took the high ground. From there we could see that the enemies were in a big trench just outside the village so we

just poured fire on them."

Donning the medal, said Toge Sr., was a big achievement for his son, who flew home to Fiji to get married at Christmas.

He won the medal with two of his comrades—Sgt Alwyn Stevens and Cpl Robert McClurg.

This is the first time any battalion has scooped three of the top gongs on the

same fighting tour.

According the *Daily Mail*, Lieutenant General Graeme Lamb, the commander of the UK Field Army, who presented the awards, described the recipients as "bigger than life and brave as a lion."

"They know the meaning of life and death, of standing by your friends, of standing up and being counted.

AMNESTY

From Page 1

"We ask Delegate Gregorio 'Kilili' Sablan to raise this with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security: What will happen to those with unpaid labor awards when federalization comes into effect?" Rabby Syed, president of the United Workers Movement NMI, yesterday said.

The group will ask the delegate to help "freeze deportation" of over-stayers until they get all their back wages and all the items in their labor awards are fulfilled, including granting of employment transfers.

Syed and Ronnie Doca, board chairman of the United Workers Movement NMI, said they will also ask DHS to create a special fund to help pay for the unpaid wages and other claims by workers in the CNMI.

"If the CNMI government cannot

require CNMI employers to pay their workers, then maybe the federal government can," said Syed.

He said the CNMI Department of Labor has only been issuing pieces of paper granting labor awards to workers but not enforcing those awards, including requiring bonding companies to pay the workers.

Syed cited the CNMI Superior Court's ruling on Thursday, saying that the Department of Labor has exclusive jurisdiction over alien workers attempting to collect on labor bonds and that the courts do not have the authority to enforce these bonds.

Associate Judge Perry B. Inos said the jurisdiction to enforce bonds issued pursuant to the CNMI Non-resident Workers Act is vested solely with Labor.

Doca said many of these over-stayers with unpaid wages also have U.S. citizen children. "If they are sent home, who will take care of their

children?" he asked.

Syed hopes the CNMI or federal government will grant an immigration status to these overstayers with unpaid labor awards.

"We ask this for humanitarian consideration, and not for political or immigration reason," said Syed.

The United Workers Movement NMI is one of three groups, along with Coalition of United Workers NMI, and the Human Dignity Movement, that held a letter writing session on Sunday. The project aims to collect personal letters from foreign workers, immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and other members of the community who will be affected by federalization by June 1.

Over 1,500 letters have so far been received, which will be hand-delivered by Florida-based activist Wendy Doromal to members of the U.S. Congress and officials of DHS and other federal agencies helping to work on federalization regulations.

CUC

From Page 1

In a 37-page document citing the results of its investigation, the consultant said Friday the proposed rates would provide CUC with the revenue necessary to implement the activities required by the stipulated order.

"Provisional rates at this level, if implemented by CUC at this time, would allow CUC to meet the specific rate setting provisions of Public Law 16-17 and the deadlines imposed by the Legislature on the establishment of CUC's financial independence," the consultant's report said.

Public Law 16-17 mandates CUC to achieve financial independence by October 2009.

Georgetown acknowledged that these new rates would be a significant "rate shock" to customers.

It said that while legislation has in part required rates at these levels, there is currently no provision to provide for the increased revenues other than through increased rates.

"If revenues were available from government contributions or grants, the impact could be lessened," it admits.

The provisional rates, if fully enforced to comply with the requirements of the stipulated order and P.L. 16-17, would mean a residential customer consuming 10,000 gallons of water per month would pay \$60.63—a 135-percent increase over the current rate of

\$25.80. If half the proposed hike is implemented, the rate will be \$43.23, and \$51.92 if two-thirds of the rate hike is adopted.

For wastewater, the current rate is \$5.50 per 10,000 gallons. This would go up to \$13.44 under a 50 percent provisional rate increase, \$17.40 under a 75 percent provisional rate hike, or \$21.40 under a full provisional rate increase.

In total, the combined billing from the current rate of \$31.30 (water and wastewater) would go up from \$56.57 to as high as \$82.03 if the proposed new rate structure for water and sewer is fully implemented.

Georgetown consultants pointed out that CUC's rates reflect only "one-third" of the fees implemented in other areas and states like Guam, Honolulu, Hawaii, Maui County, and American Samoa.

"The potential full provisional rates for CUC would be competitive and in most cases below the rates of comparable utilities," the report added.

'Disastrous impact'

CUC's artificially low water and wastewater rates, while currently being enjoyed by consumers, have come at the expense of CUC and the environment for several years, resulting in customers suffering from poor availability, poor customer service, and in some cases a total lack of service, the consultant's report said.

"The rates currently in effect are so low that continuation of those rates is not possible without a disastrous im-

pact on CUC, its consumers, business interest, tourism, and the government of the CNMI," the consultant said, adding that the current situation will only deteriorate further unless affirmative action is taken to improve the financial health of CUC and for its water and wastewater rates to be brought into compliance.

Georgetown said this will start the process of moving CUC to a full cost recovery.

The consultant proposed an across-the-board hike and such rates be implemented on a provisional basis and that CUC's circumstances be reviewed every six months.

'Too many uncertainties'

The consultant cited "too many uncertainties" associated with the development of the full provisional rates. Specifically, it added, it is unknown what permanent impact the recent drop in the number of CUC customers are impact of the loss of the garment industry, and extended power outages during 2008 on water and wastewater revenues for Fiscal Year 2008, and water system sales.

It has also concerns about the reasonableness of the electricity costs for water and wastewater operations, and the lack of a full financial audit.

"Taking into consideration these uncertainties, we consider at this time that appropriate rate relief would be in the range of 50 to 75 percent of the full recovery rates," the report indicated.

AEDAN

From Page 1

and thanked God for their son's successful transplant at the University Medical Center in Tucson, Arizona.

"Mario, Kallan [their other son], and myself are thrilled to have our boy home and we can now slowly have our lives back," Sablan said.

She said doctors did a bone-marrow (stem-cells or cord blood) biopsy to see just how well Aedan was accepting the cord-blood transplant.

The doctors, she said, found 100 percent new healthy cells, which is more than they expected.

"None of Aedan's cells were present so that means no more leukemia!" Sablan said.

Sablan, a native of Saipan, met her husband, Mario Duldalo, in Las Vegas. They have two sons—Aedan and 1-year-old Kallan.

Aedan was only 18 months old in 2005 when he was diagnosed with high-risk acute lymphoblastic leukemia, which is cancer of the blood-forming tissues known as the bone marrow.

October 2008 was supposed to be the end of the boy's agonizing chemo-

therapy treatment, but the leukemia had relapsed and was found to be even more aggressive.

An extensive search for a match in the National Donor Registry and the Cord-blood Donor Registry found three cord-blood matches.

In November 2008, Sablan's clan on Saipan organized a fundraising at the Pacific Islands Club for Aedan. The event received an outpouring of support from family members, friends, community members, and businesses.

By the end of November 2008, Aedan underwent the bone-marrow transplant. He was discharged last Jan. 24 and has had daily appointments, including weekends that last four to six hours long. The post-transplant visits are expected to last for a few months.

Sablan said Aedan has a 90-percent chance of remaining in remission for a year.

"After that it means he is cured! Happy tears I tell you!" Sablan said.

She said Kallan loves having his brother back home.

"He rubs Aedan's smooth head, gives hugs, follows Aedan around, or just smile and stares at him. It's so cute and endearing to watch," Sablan added.

FAA

From Page 1

CPA executive director Efrain Camacho disclosed this Saturday, saying the removal of the high-risk status was a result of recent changes in the agency's financial management and controls.

The federal agency placed CPA in the high risk category in 2007 due to "questionable administrative costs" in the federal funds provided to airport projects.

FAA ranks airports according to three categories based on how each uses the federal airport improvement project funds:

- No risk status means the agency conforms with all the requirements;
- Moderate risk where it needs to address certain recommendation; and
- High-risk for severe noncompliance with federal rules and standards.

Camacho said that CPA was cited by FAA in the Office of the Inspector General's Report, indicating "serious concerns" in handling grants.

He declined to give figures about the questionable administrative costs cited in the federal report.

"FAA wants CPA to set up controls within accounting to make sure that expenditures are recorded properly, and controls on travel and other expenses using federal grants," Camacho told *Saipan Tribune*.

Camacho immediately took steps to address federal concerns, including the hiring of a CIP/federal grant accountant as required by FAA. CPA, *Saipan Tribune* learned, has hired Chris Camacho for the position and a new certified public accountant for the comptroller position.

Camacho said the new CIP/federal

grant accounting is re-organizing the department and will develop a tracking system for the office.

"Both FAA and CPA are now confident that we are moving forward," Camacho said, citing the removal of the agency from the severe FAA sanction.

Camacho said CPA has been "undermanned" and has failed to hire a CPA comptroller since the start.

He disclosed that the OIG report cited CPA for its audit reports in fiscal years 2005, 2006, and 2007.

"CPA's attention was called to the fact that we need to address these concerns in the OIG report...so we immediately took actions that included the setting up of specific new accounts for the federal grants and hiring an individual exclusively responsible for accounting these grants," he said.

Camacho said CPA is targeting to be in full compliance—or the no-risk category—in July 2009.

"Now that CPA is on moderate risk status—from high risk category—it is our goal to step up to the no-risk level and that's within this year," he said, adding that "CPA is in the right direction."

Camacho said this will be realized when the agency completes the cost-allocation plan for all federal monies received for airport projects.

Saipan Tribune learned that there are over 30 airport projects in the CNMI worth \$105.6 million that CPA had asked the federal agency to fund, with the following requested drawdown: \$37.7 million in FY 2008; \$32.8 million in FY 2009; and \$30.1 million in FY 2010.

These projects cover improvements, expansions, procurement of equipment and rehabilitation of airport sites and facilities.

ON MCPHETRES' RESIGNATION

Fitial respects the 'independence' of NMC

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Fitial administration respects the autonomy of the Northern Marianas College

much like it respects other autonomous agencies in the government, according to Gov. Be-

nigno R. Fitial's press secretary, Charles Reyes Jr.

Reacting to the resignation of

NMC Board of Regents member Agnes McPhetres on Friday, Reyes said: "As with the Public School System, the governor continues to respect the constitutional autonomy and independence of the Northern Marianas College. The governor's primary role is to make qualified appointments to the Board of Regents. These appointments were confirmed by the Senate. The governor has made several appointments and he continues to rely on the Board of Regents to properly manage and administer the college with the overriding objective of securing full accreditation status for the college."

He stressed that Fitial will not attempt to micromanage or interfere politically with the management of NMC as the management of the college is a responsibility that rests solely with the Board of Regents.

"The governor need not ac-

cept a resignation letter in order for a resignation to be effective. If a vacancy exists in the NMC BOR, I expect the governor to make a qualified appointment," Reyes said.

As of yesterday, NMC president Carmen Fernandez has yet to comment regarding the resignation of McPhetres, who cited concerns about Fernandez's management of the college and the internal bickering within the institutions as the reasons for her abrupt departure.

However, Fernandez last Saturday reiterated that the college is determined to achieve its goals of getting the full approval of the commission despite "distractions" that come their way.

"More than ever, we are determined to not let any distractions divert our focus from obtaining accreditation reaffirmation," Fernandez said in a statement Saturday.

NMC was placed in continued show-cause status after two remaining team recommendations were not fully addressed.

The accrediting body requires the institution to submit its final report by April 1, 2009.



Reyes



McPhetres

NMC accreditation efforts in high gear—Fernandez

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Northern Marianas College's efforts to reaffirm its accreditation with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges is in high gear, according to college president Dr. Carmen Fernandez.

By April 1, NMC is required to submit its final report to the commission focusing on the two remaining recommendations cited in the continued show-cause status issued by WASC last month.

"The accrediting commission has already acknowledged and recognized the work that we have done to comply with accreditation requirements that dealt with student learning outcomes, employee evaluations, facility renovations and repair, and administrative capacity," said Fernandez.

She added that they are now centering their efforts on the remaining unresolved recommendations, which involve integrating planning, program review, budgeting, and institutionalizing the program review process.

The president reiterated the college's determination to achieve its goal of getting the full approval of the commission despite distractions that come their way.

"More than ever, we are determined to not let any distractions divert our focus from

obtaining accreditation reaffirmation," she said.

As evidence of the ongoing program review, the second cycle (cycle 2) of the program review process at the college is well underway with over 40 programs having submitted information about their missions, intended program outcomes, and means of assessment and success criteria, according to Fernandez.

Additionally, she added, the Planning, Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee adopted at its regular meeting on March 6, 2009, the

"Success Criteria for Program Review First Cycle."

"The passage of the success criteria for program review is a major step for the college because it allows the college community to evaluate what it is we accomplished in the first cycle," said Wil Castro, PROAC chair and director of NMC's Office of Institutional Effectiveness. "It is what WASC requires of us, to step back and evaluate both the process and outcomes of the program review process."

Fernandez said that PROAC will also act on the stra-



Fernandez



CULTURAL DIVERSITY

High school students from different schools work on a group activity during the Cultural Diversity 2009 workshop sponsored by the NMI Council for the Humanities at Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

NOVENA TO
St. Jude

Holy St. Jude, Apostle & Martyr, great in virtue, rich in miracles, near in Kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke Your special patronage in time of need. To You I have recourse from the depth of my heart & humbly begged great power to come to my assistance. Help me in my present and most urgent petition. In return, I promise to make Your name known and cause You to be invoked.

Say three Our Fathers, three Hail Mary's and Glory Be's. Publication must be promised. St. Jude pray for us all who invoke your aid, Amen. This Novena has never been known to fail. I have had my request granted. Thank you St. Jude.

JUANITA PROPST

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Statewide Independent Living Council
FY 09' 2nd General Membership Meeting
PO Box 501521 Saipan, MP 96950, TEL.: (670)322-6537 FAX: (670)322-6536
TTY (670) 322-6449 EMAIL: voc.rehab@saipan.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to I CMC §99 10, the public is advised that the Statewide Independent Living Council will hold its FY 09 2nd General Membership Meeting on Thursday, March 12, 2009 at the Azucena I, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan at 10:00am-2:00pm. Interested individuals are welcome to attend.

AGENDA

- I. **Call to Order/Preliminaries**
 - Review and Adoption of Agenda
 - Review and Adoption of 10/15/08 Minutes
- II. **Reports**
 - OVR Director's Report
 - SILC Chairperson Report
- III. **Old Business**
 - Follow up on SPIL Amendments
 - Follow up on vacancy Appointments
- IV. **New Business**
 - SILC Empowerment & Advocacy Activities
 - Joint State Plan Forums for Saipan, Tinian, & Rota
- V. **Announcements**
- VI. **Adjournment**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend the meeting but require accommodations such as large print or sign language interpreters, are asked to call 322-6537 (voice) or 322-6449 (TTY). Please contact MaginGinoef (Council Liaison) two days in advance for necessary arrangements.

/s/ Kaye Christian
SILC Chairperson

Publication of this notice was paid for with federal funds made possible by the United States Department of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)

Northern Marianas College
Procurement & Property Management
Office P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Tel: (670) 234-5498 ext. 2300/01/02 Fax: (670) 235-7601
E-mail: procurement@nmcnet.edu Website: www.nmcnet.edu

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP NO.: 09-002

NMC FACILITY MASTER PLAN

Northern Marianas College is soliciting sealed proposals for its Facility Master Plan.

Specifications and Scope of Work packages may be picked up at the NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, commencing March 09, 2009 or Monday thru Friday between the hours of 8:30-11:30 a.m and 1:00-4:00pm.

Proposal Packages are due no later than 4:00 p.m, March 20, 2009 Saipan time at the Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, BLDG L, 2nd Floor, Saipan, MP 96950. Article 7, "Local Preference" as amended by Public Laws 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, is available to local vendors in this procurement. For Proposers located outside of the CNMI: You may request a copy of the RFP via fax (670) 235-7601 or e-mail to Anita Camacho (anitac@nmcnet.edu).

Pre-proposal meeting: March 13, 2009 at 2:00PM
NMC Procurement Office, 2nd Floor, Bldg L
Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. Northern Marianas College reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals for any reason and waive any defect in said proposals, or cancel in part or its entirety this RFP, it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College.

All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer. All submittals shall become the property of NMC and will not be returned.

/s/ Anita C. Camacho
NMC Procurement Manager

/s/ Rogelio L. Madriaga
NMC, Chief Financial and Admin. Officer

Broadcast License Assignment

On February 13, 2009 an application was filed with the FCC to assign the license of stations KCNM(AM), 1080 KHz, Saipan, KCNM-FM, 101.1 MHz, Garapan-Saipan and KZMI(FM), 103.9 MHz, Garapan-Saipan from Inter-Island Communications, Inc to Choice Broadcasting Company, LLC.

The officers, directors and owners of the assignor are Edward H. Poppe, Frances W. Poppe, Edward H. Poppe III, Michelle Aguon, Matthew J. Poppe and Cheryl Kelly.

The managers and members of the assignee are Richard C. Yu, Jeselyn T. Yu and Robert F. Kelley, Jr.

A copy of the application, amendments and related materials are on file for public inspection at Inter-Island Communications Inc. Sablan Bldg San Jose Saipan.

Commonwealth I Sankattan Siha Na Islas Mariana Ofisinan I Gubietno Dipåttamenton I Tano’ Pupbliku

NOTISIAN MAPROPONE POT ATKILON TÂNO’ PUPBLIKU

Kinonsiste ni Seksiona 106 (b) gi Lai Pupbliku 15-2, I Dipåttamenton I Tano’ Pupbliku man nânâ’i’ notisia pot I intension na para u ma’atkila I tano’ pupbliku giya Saipan, Commonwealth I Sankattan Siha Na Islas Mariana. Maseha háyi na petsona gi pupbliku henerât siña muna halom opinion, infotmasion, kinontran testimonio pot para u kuentâyi I propositun I Kontrâtan Atkilon. Ni maprobeniyi más ginen I Lai Pupbliku 15-2, manisisita para u mapupblika I man impotânte na infotmasion gi sigente:

- i. I tano’ pupbliku ni ma’atkila madeskribi kumo Sitio Numiro 190 E 01 a konsiste kâsi 4,809 square meters menos osino más, ni gaige gi Lower Base giya Saipan. Kopian I lugât I sitio gaige gi Dipåttamenton I Tano’ Pupbliku para u ma’ina.
- ii. I para u atkila I Cargo Express (Saipan), Inc., un koporasion giya CNMI. I Direktot I Kuetpon I koporasion I man sigente: si Liberato C. Legaspi, Marie Christine T. Legaspi, Alejo C. Legaspi, yan si Lawrence Lemuel T. Legaspi.

I presidente I koporasion si Liberato C. Legaspi. I segundon I presidete si Marie Christine T. Legaspi. I sekretário si Lawrence Lemuel T. Legaspi. I tresurerun si Alejo C. Legaspi.
- iii. Si Siñot Liberato C. Legaspi yan si Siñot Noel Masongsong a negosio I kontrâta para I mapropone na atkilon.

I para u fanatkila debi u na'setbi i tano' solamenti para u na'guaha' fasilidât para muna'hanao kâtga siha.

I tiempion I mapropositu na Kontrâtan Atkilon bente-singko años (25 yrs.), gai’ chânsa para u ekstiende para talo kinse años (15 yrs.).

I mapropositu na âpas atkilon gi sakkan durânten I tiempo sigun I mapega na presiu pot I baliña I lugât.
- v. I kabâles na kopian I Kontrâtan Atkilon siña u machule’ gi Ofisinan I Dipåttamenton I Tano’ Pupbliku, ni gaige gi mina dos na bibienda gi Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, giya Saipan, mina dos bibienda gi Bank of Saipan Commercial Building giya Luta, fine’nina na bibienda gi Kings Commercial Building giya Tinian.
- vi. Tî maresibe’ otto na klâsen propositu ni I Dipåttamenton I Tano’ Pupbliku ni para u ma’atkila I tano’ giya Lower Base, Saipan.
- vii. I Sekretário gi Dipåttamenton I Tano’ Pupbliku siempre a aksepta tinige’ opinion, mensâhen kinontra yan testimonio osino otto siha na propositu ginen I man enteresao na petsona gi pat ântes di Matso 23, 2009 gi Ofisinan I Dipåttamenton I Tano’ Pupbliku ni gaige giya Saipan, Tinian yan Luta.

ARONGORONG REEL POMWOL AKKILONUL FALÚWEER TOULAP

Sángi Tálil 106 (b) mellól Allégghúl Toulap ye 15-2, Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap ekke atotoowow ammataf igha ebwe akkilaaló eghús falúw mellól Seipél, Commonwealth Téél Falúwasch Marianas. Schóókka eyoor máfiyeer rebwe isisilong ischil mángámangiir, aweewe, aingiingil reel pomwol akkilonul ammwelil falúweer toulap. Me bwal Allégghúl Toulap ye 15-2, e ayoora, lamal aweewe kka rebwe mweiti ngali milikka ebwe akkatééló.

- i. Pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap ekke bwáári Lot No.190 E 01, eyoor faawu sangaras walabwughúw tiwoow (4,809 square meters), elap me ngáre eghús, elo Lower Base, Seipél. Tilighial bwuley yeel nge eyoor llól Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap (Public Lands) ngare óubwe ghuley fischiy.
- ii. Schéschéél schóól akkilon nge Cargo Express (Saipan), Inc., CNMI corporation. Schóóy mwiisch mellol Corpora-tion nge Liberato C. Legaspi, Marie Christine T. Legaspi, Alejo C. Legaspi, me Lawrence Lemuel T. Legaspi.

Schóóy assamwool nge Liberato C. Legaspi, Vice President nge Marie Christine T. Legaspi, sekkretario nge Alejo C. Legaspi, treasurer nge Lawrence Lemuel T. Legaspi.
- iii. Schóól aweweel akkilon nge Mr. Liberato C. Legaspi me Mr. Noel C. Masongsong.
- iv. Schóóy akkilon ebwe yááli bwuley reel leliyel ammwelil kkaragha schagh.

Tool aighúghúl pomwol akkilon ebwe ruweigh me limwoow ráágh (25 years), emmwel rebwe sóbweey ngáli bwal seigh me limwoow ráágh (15 years).

Pomwol akkilon ebwe mwir sáangi llapal méél falúw (value of the property) fengal me milikka re ayuuw mellol faluw.

- v. Emmwel óubwe bwughil tilighial akkilon mellól bwulasiyool ammwelil falúweer toulap, elo aruwowal pwó(2nd floor) me Joeten Dandan Commercial Building llól Dandan, Seipél; aruwowal pwó (2nd floor) mellól Bank of Saipan Commercial Building, Luuta; me ngáre mmwal pwó (1st floor) mellól Kings Commercial Building, Tchúlúyól.
- vi. Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge esáál bweibwogh mwo akkáaw pomwol akkilon yeel me Lower Base, Saipan.

Samwoolul Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap ebwe bwughil aweewe kkaal, aingiingil, mereer amweyút aramas mmwal schagh Mááilap (March) 23, 2009 mellól Depattamentool Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap iye elo Seipél, Luuta me Tchúlúyól..

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE OF PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to lease certain public lands in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

- i. The proposed lease of public land is described as Lot No. 190 E 01, containing an area of approximately 4,809 square meters, more or less, situated in Lower Base, Saipan. A copy of the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands for inspection.
- iii. The prospective lessee is Cargo Express (Saipan), Inc., a CNMI corporation. The board of directors of the corpora-tion are Liberato C. Legaspi, Marie Christine T. Legaspi, Alejo C. Legaspi, and Lawrence Lemuel T. Legaspi.

The President of the corporation is Liberato C. Legaspi. The vice president is Marie Christine T. Legaspi. The secretary is Lawrence Lemuel T. Legaspi. The Treasurer is Alejo C. Legaspi.
- iv. The proposed lease was negotiated by Mr. Liberato C. Legaspi and Mr. Noel C. Masongsong.
- v. The lessee shall use the premises solely for the purpose of developing and operating a freight forwarding facility.

The term of the proposed lease agreement is 25 years, with an option to extend the lease for an additional 15 years.

The proposed annual rental during the term is based on a percentage of the appraised fair market value of the property including existing structures.

- v. A copy of the proposed lease agreement may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; the 2nd floor of the Bank of Saipan Commercial Building, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.
- vi. The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public land in Lower Base, Saipan.
- vii. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before March 23, 2009 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

STIMULUS MONEY BEGINNING TO ARRIVE \$2.755M transportation and justice grants now available

WASHINGTON, D.C.—CN-MI Delegate Gregorio “Kilili” C. Sablan announced yesterday that two more federal agencies are sending stimulus grants to the Northern Mariana Islands. The grant amounts are set by exist-ing formulas in the law and total \$2,755,217.

The Department of Trans- portation is making \$1,114,292 available through two grants for transportation infrastructure. The CNMI qualifies for both the Large Urban Cities Program and the Rural Areas Program, which provide support for pub- lic transportation systems. The monies can be used for capital improvements, operating costs, or planning by government agencies, nonprofit organiza- tions, and operators of public transportation services.

The Department of Justice an- nounced a grant of \$1,640,925 under the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Program. The Byrne program, administered by the Bu- reau of Justice Assistance, allows states to support a broad range of activities to prevent and control crime and improve the criminal justice system. The funds can be used for state and local initiatives,

technical assistance, training, per- sonnel, equipment, supplies, con- tractual support, and information systems for criminal justice for any one or more of the following purpose areas: law enforcement programs; prosecution and court programs; prevention and educa- tion programs; corrections and community corrections programs; drug treatment programs; and planning, evaluation, and technol- ogy improvement programs.

Sablan said he is glad to see that the funds from the American Re- covery and Reinvestment Act are being distributed quickly to the Northern Marianas and through- out the country.

“Our intention in Congress was to move speedily to address the loss of jobs and the downturn in the economy nationwide,” he said. “Nowhere are these stimu- lus funds needed more than in the Northern Marianas to create jobs and pump millions of new dollars into the local economy.”

ARRA passed the House of Representatives without a single Republican vote. The Northern Marianas congressman is a mem- ber of the Democratic caucus.

Also, the Department of Edu- cation over the weekend issued

initial guidelines on a number of grant programs available to the CNMI Public School System and estimated to be \$3,340,667. These include Title 1, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and the Individ- uals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B. Title 1 funds are tar- geted to schools that have high concentrations of students from families that live in poverty in order to help improve teaching and learning for students most at risk of failing to meet state acade- mic achievement standards.

Here, too, Sablan cautioned that the federal funds needed to be used wisely and with speed. “The law requires that eight- five percent of the Title 1 funds must be obligated by Sept. 30, 2010. This money is meant to be spent to protect jobs and to create new economic activity, renovating schools and invest- ing in energy-saving.

“It’s important to remember, though, that these funds are probably just a one-shot deal. So they shouldn’t be used to create new programs that will then require some new source of funding in two or three years,” he said. **(PR)**



NEWS BRIEFS

NMC Alumni meeting

Graduates and former students of the Northern Marianas College are invited to attend the NMC Alumni Association meeting scheduled for March 12, 2009, at the Hard Rock Café at 6:30pm.

The general meeting is for all NMC alumni (those who have graduated with NMC degrees or those who have earned at least 24 NMC academic credits) and will feature the presentation of the alumni logo, picture taking for alumni member- ship cards, alumni reunion event selection, alumni survey, and other important topics. There will also be a discussion on the Alumni Survey, which is an important part of the College’s accreditation ef- forts. All alumni are strongly encouraged to attend this meeting. **(NMC)**

Zoning to hold training sessions

The Zoning Office is inviting the public to attend training sessions about the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008. Three of the sessions are geared to specific audiences and one will be for the general public but anyone may attend any session. Each session will start with a briefing and then answer questions. A reservation is not necessary to attend.

March 10, Multi-Purpose Building, Susupe
9am: Signs and banners for retailers and others
1:30pm: Adult businesses for adult business own- ers (massage parlors, strip clubs, porno shops, etc.)
March 12 Multi-Purpose Building, Susupe
9am: Overview of the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008 for developers and the general public
1:30pm: Land subdivision for surveyors and others involved in subdividing property

The Saipan Zoning Law of 2008, permit applica- tion forms, and other information are available to download on the Zoning website at www.zoning.gov.mp. Paper copies of the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008 may also be purchased for \$10 at the Zoning Office (2nd Floor, Joeten DanDan Building). **(PR)**

Bank of Guam hosts TV ad contest

HAGATNA, Guam—The Bank of Guam is host- ing a competition to select broadcast quality 30-

second commercials to be used by the bank.

■ Theme: Meeting the financial needs of our community
■ Categories: 1) Savings Accounts, 2) Consum- er Loans/Credit Cards.
■ Bonus Category: Bank of Guam Image
■ Medium: Submissions must be no more than 26 seconds in length. Entries must be submitted on a CD/DVD and must be of broadcast quality
■ Eligibility: Open to all high school and col- lege/university students throughout Guam, CNMI, Palau, FSM, and Marshall Islands. Entries may be submitted by an individual or a group
Enrollment includes the registration form, release of commercial agreement and model/ image(s) release form.

Prizes are as follows: \$2,000 first prize; \$1,000 second prize; \$500 third prize; \$500 bonus cat- egory prize.

Entry forms are available at all high schools, the University of Guam, Guam Community College, NMI College, Palau Community College, College of Micronesia and Bank of Guam branches and its website www.bankofguam.com. **(BoG)**

Fiesta Resort at Managaha

Effective March 1, 2009 Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan has assumed management of the restaurant facility on Managaha Island. The islet is known for its white sandy beaches and is reached by a pleasant boat trip from Saipan’s docks. Tourists and local residents have been enjoying day trips there for years.

Fiesta’s Food & Beverage manager Das Krish- nan is excited to promote this unique venue to lo- cal residents. Whether it is a corporate party or a special occasion such as birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, or holiday celebrations, Fiesta’s F&B team can customize a menu that will fit any life- style and budget.

Executive Chef Abe promises an improved menu with exceptional quality—all for a gener- ous price.

For more information on these packages, contact Fiesta’s F&B Coordinators at telephone number 234-7171 ext. 1512. **(PR)**

Legislature OKs lease deal for \$300M Tinian casino

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With a 25-3 vote, the Senate and the House of Representatives approved on Friday the lease agreement for a 300-hectare public land on Tinian for the construction of a \$300 million casino and resort by Neo Gold Wings Paradise.

Any lease of public land consisting of more than 5 hectares requires legislative approval.

With the adoption of Joint Session Resolution 16-3, Neo Gold Wings Paradise Saipan Corp.—doing business as NGP Casino and Hotel—can now proceed with the development of a “six-star,” 1,000-room mega hotel resort/golf course and casino.

The legislative approval of Neo Gold Wings’ public land lease came just a few hours after the \$60 million to \$80 million Flame Sako Resort and Spa broke ground in As Matuis on Friday.

Initial 25-year lease

The 32-page land lease agreement between the Department of Public Lands and Neo Gold Wings calls for a 25-year lease, with an option of extending it for an additional term of 15 years.

Neo Gold Wings has decided to exercise the option to extend the lease, saying a longer lease period helps secure financing for the project development.

Of the 29 members of the Senate and the House, only one was absent during Friday’s joint session—Rep. Justo Quitugua.

Those who voted “no” on J.S.R. 16-3 were Sen. Luis Crisostimo, Rep. Tina Sablan, and Rep. Stanley Torres.

“Some members, myself included, were not even aware that we were approving a 25-year lease, as well as the 15-year extension, all in one shot, which has apparently never been done before in the history of the Commonwealth, until the day of the session,” Sablan told *Saipan Tribune*.

The other 25 lawmakers present at the session voted “yes.”

Economic savior

J.S.R. 16-3 grants approval of a lease deal between DPL and Neo Gold Wings for the leasing of approximately 3 million square meters or 300 hectares of public land in the Pina area on Tinian.

Introduced by House Committee on Natural Resources chair Rep. Ramon A. Tebuteb, Senate Committee on Resources, Economic Development and

Programs chair Jude U. Hofschneider and committee members, S.J.R. 16-3 said Neo Gold Wings’ casino and resort project will “contribute substantially to the future economic development” of the CNMI and Tinian by providing more jobs and opening a wide range of service-oriented businesses in these tough economic times.

Two other investors are proposing to build casino and hotel resorts on Tinian, which so far has only one operating casino, the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino.

Reality check

DPL’s concern on the huge size of the public land to be leased out to the casino investor stalled the signing of the land lease deal and the subsequent joint legislative session to consider the agreement.

Public Lands Secretary John DelRosario said there was initially no justification for leasing 300 hectares, and that DPL wanted the casino investor to start with a smaller scale project, then expand it as needed.

“That’s reality check,” DelRosario told *Saipan Tribune*.

He said Neo Gold Wings is required by the lease agreement to provide DPL evidence of its sources of financing for the proposed construction within six months from the commencement of the lease.

The lease term commences 15 calendar days from March 6, when the Legislature approved the lease.

DelRosario said Neo Gold Wings also has 30 months to build and complete the construction of the project.

“If it fails to build the project in 30 months, anything that’s not used goes back to DPL,” he said.

‘Irresponsible’

Rep. Tina Sablan expressed disappointment over the absence of information in the agreement about the specific terms of the additional 15-year lease, and the Legislature’s apparent lack of interest in debating the issue.

“I think what we did today is completely irresponsible,” Sablan said during the session.

Assistant Attorney General Brad-dock Huesman, counsel for DPL, said the absence of details about the 15-year extension was just an “oversight.”

The joint session was announced with only a day’s notice.

Sablan also expressed dismay over the distribution of the final lease deal only a day before the session, and the distribution of the committee report and a joint resolution approving the



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider, second from right, and Sen. Pres. Pete P. Reyes, right, join Tinian officials and representatives from Neo Gold Wings Paradise right after Friday’s joint legislative session that approved the land lease deal between Neo Gold Wings and the Department of Public Lands involving 300 hectares of public land on Tinian.

lease deal only minutes before the joint House and Senate session on Friday afternoon, giving lawmakers a short period of time to review the documents.

A copy of the land appraisal report was also not circulated to lawmakers until the day of the session.

“The joint session would not have been called, however, if the required number of votes had not already been secured to approve the lease agreement... There were enough members who did not even feel the need to discuss the proposed lease in any meaningful way, as we saw in the rush to end debate and call for the vote,” Sablan said.

Rep. Stanley Torres, who also voted “no” on the lease deal, questioned the notary and signature on the land lease deal.

Sen. Luis Crisostimo said he would have voted “yes” to the lease agreement if it stated that Neo Gold Wings Paradise’s employees will consist of 80 percent Tinian residents.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios said the employment issue may be moot once the federalization of CNMI immigration sets in.

Besides DPL and Neo Gold Wings representatives, also present during the session were members of the Tinian Municipal Council and the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission.

‘Grandiose’

Sablan said the process in which the public land lease agreement with Neo Gold Wings was approved raises questions about the management and disposition of public lands in general, and the due diligence that is exercised in the review, negotiation and approval of public land leases to private investors.

“After the session, members counseled me to not worry so much about the apparent lack of a marketing plan, financing, and corporate structure of the investors to whom we were signing off 300 hectares of public land for 40 years for a mere 2.4 cents per square meter for the first few years, without knowing the terms of the last 15 years,” Sablan said.

She added, “If the investors do not show proof of adequate financing within six months, they told me the lease will be revoked and the CNMI loses nothing. I disagree with that sentiment. It is not only public land that is at stake here whenever we negotiate such lease agreements, but also the credibility of the government, and our ability to attract legitimate, high-quality investors now and in the future.”

She also described as “grandiose” the conceptual plan offered by Neo Gold Wings.

“A six-star, 1,000-room mega hotel and casino, golf course, international meeting hall, artificial ice stadium, artificial snow stadium, man-made beach, a fountain yard, a ‘Kursaal’ project, a ‘fire balloon game’, a helicab, a ‘yacht orbital way’, and other facilities and amenities,” she said.

Neo Gold Wings’ marketing plans “are unfortunately a bit vague” and its corporate structure is “also unclear,” said Sablan, adding that the casino investor’s financing plan is “ambiguous.”

“They may get backing from ‘a major U.S. bank’, and other ‘fund companies’, and they plan to ‘sell stocks,’” she said.

Sen. Jude Hofschneider, Sen. Paul Manglona and others who voted in favor of the land lease deal said the “bigger picture” is the economic contributions of the casino investment to the

CNMI and its residents during these times troubling times.

Payment terms

The Legislature also adopted Joint Standing Committees Report 16-2, which recommends the approval of the lease agreement between DPL and Neo Gold Wings.

Under the lease agreement dated March 4, 2009, Neo Gold Wings would pay DPL \$72,000 on the first and second year.

The first rental payment of \$72,000 or 2 percent of the fair market value is due and payable on or about April 10, 2009, according to the report of the standing committees.

On the third year, the casino investor would pay DPL \$72,000 or 3 percent of the gross receipts, whichever is greater.

On the fourth and fifth year, the payment would go up to \$108,000 or 3 percent of the fair market value. The alternative would be to pay 3 percent of the gross receipts, whichever is greater.

Under the lease deal, Neo Gold Wings would pay DPL 4 percent of the fair market value or 3 percent of the gross receipts, whichever is greater, on the sixth and seventh year.

On the eighth year, the payment would be 5 percent of the fair market value or 3 percent of the gross receipts, whichever is greater.

On the ninth and tenth year, the casino investor would pay 6 percent of the fair market value or 3 percent of the gross receipts, again, whichever is greater.

Annual payments on the third five-year period would be 7 percent of the fair market value or 3 percent of the gross receipts, whichever is greater.

On the fourth and fifth five-year periods, DPL would be paid either 8 percent of the fair market value or 3 percent of the gross receipts, whichever is greater.

As pointed out by Rep. Tina Sablan, neither the 32-page lease agreement nor the standing committees report has information about the rental schedule for the additional lease term of 15 years.

Annual Poetry Competition on Thursday

The Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities is inviting the public to the Sixth Annual Valentine Sengebau Poetry Competition to be held at the American Memorial Park Visitors Center Theater on Thursday, March 12, at 6:30pm.

Students from junior high and high schools on Saipan, Rota, and Tinian will be competing for cash prizes and trophies during this event.

Their poems will be in a variety of styles and address topics relating to culture, identity and change in the Northern Marianas.

Competitors will be scored by panels of judges in two criteria: poetry content and recital quality. Content judges will consider the use of symbolism, imagery, and metaphor, while

ON THE NET

www.nmihumanities.org

recital judges will score each poet’s style and delivery.

Poem content will count for 70 percent of the score and recital quality 30 percent.

First place finishers in the junior and

senior divisions will have their names inscribed on perpetual trophies that will be kept by the winning schools until next year’s competition. First through third place finishers in each division will also receive cash prizes.

The Sengebau Poetry Competition is sponsored annually by the NMI Council for the Humanities to foster local literary capabilities. Interested individuals wishing more information about this event may contact Council staff at 235-4785 or visit the Council’s website at www.nmihumanities.org. (PR)

Asiana praised for commitment to CNMI

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives has lauded Asiana Airlines for its continued commitment to and support of the CNMI's travel industry since 1992, and is congratulating the airline for being selected as the Airline of the Year 2009 by Penton Media's *Air Transport World*.

Penton Media's *Air Transport World*, a leading monthly magazine covering the global airline industry, bestowed the award to Asiana Airlines for its commitment to passenger safety and operational excellence.

This award is considered one

of the most honorable awards in the airline industry.

"Despite the global recession, Asiana Airlines continues to provide air service to the CNMI from Seoul and Busan, South Korea and most recently from Osaka, Japan," according to House Joint Resolution 16-25, which was unanimously adopted by the House on Wednesday.

H.J.R. 16-25, introduced by Rep. Diego T. Benavente, said that Asiana Airlines, the CNMI's sole airline partner from South Korea, has been providing direct flights to the CNMI since 1992.

"There exists a mutually

beneficial opportunity for Asiana Airlines and the CNMI with the outbound markets from South Korea and Japan in light of the CNMI's close proximity and a short travel time from South Korea and Japan to the CNMI," the resolution stated.

Formerly Seoul Air International, Asiana Airlines is one of South Korea's two major airlines, along with Korean Air.

Asiana Airlines is a subsidiary of Kumho Asiana, which made a significant investment in the CNMI through the purchase of Laolao Bay Golf Resort in February 2007 and has since made substantial improvements

to include a new club house and other facilities, completing the first phase of its \$68.8 million luxury golf resort community project on Saipan.

H.J.R. 16-25 said that Kumho Asiana chairman and chief executive officer Sam-Koo Park, through Kumho Resorts president B.K. Kim, reaffirmed Kumho Asiana's continuing commitment to the CNMI at the December 2008 unveiling of the new Laolao Bay Golf Resort facilities.

This, according to the resolution, is reflected in the continued development of golf resorts on Saipan despite the global economic recession.

Group gets \$10K to fight HIV stigma in NMI

The Napu Life Foundation, a nationally recognized 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt organization, has been granted \$10,000 to break down the barriers of stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS in the CNMI.

Since its inception on July 8, 2005, the Napu Life Foundation has worked hard to fulfill its mission in creating and providing innovative community programs that would heighten community awareness of this pandemic.

With the recent grant award provided by the Office of Minority Health Resource Center based out of Washington D.C., Napu Life will be implementing a membership recruitment drive that would allow interested community members to be educated and involved in the various activities of Napu Life.

"Our primary aim is to empower the community through education and application. There are still many misconceptions about HIV and AIDS," said Jack Kiyoshi Jr., Napu Life board vice president. "Silence fuels the stigma of HIV and AIDS in our com-

munity. We are determined to equip our community to take a proactive stance in breaking through the silence by learning about, discussing, and taking action to stop the spread of HIV and AIDS in our island community."

Napu Life's role will also aim to identify local and national resources to provide services not currently offered through existing organizations. Furthermore, it will also continue to serve as the primary advocacy group for HIV/AIDS related issues.



Napu Life Outreach Coordinator Jack Sablan tells about the programs and services offered by the Napu Life Foundation.

Hopwood, WSR students help build schools

PeaceBuilders at Hopwood Junior High and at William S. Reyes Elementary Schools are now collecting pennies through Mar. 31, 2009, to help remote, underserved communities in Pakistan and Afghanistan build schools.

Inspired by Greg Mortenson's bestseller *The Cups of Tea*, PeacePartners Inc., the owner of the PeaceBuilder program, has invited all of its more than 1,000 sites to participate in this global community fundraising event.

Both schools have been using the PeaceBuilder program for more than 10 years to teach young people skills that help them build safe, peaceful environment; and they have seen the difference it makes in student behavior. The secret to their success is the praise and encouragement adults provide to youth along with adult-role modeling of the mix PeaceBuilder principles.

Hopwood and WSR will collect pennies from students, staff and community. Their donations, along with donations from other PeaceBuilder sites all across the United States, will be sent to Pennies for Peace, a program of Central

do such grand things as build schools in countries half way around the world," says Michelle Molina, president of PeacePartners, an organization that teaches youth how to interact in a peaceful environment. "By encouraging children to donate loose change they've collected, we teach them that even something as small as a penny- or a child- really can make a difference."

Youth and other individuals who wish to participate in this effort should turn in their donations to a licensed PeaceBuilders site. To find a participate locations, e-mail pennies@peacebuilders.com or call toll-free 1-877-4-peacenow. Peacebuilders is owned and operated by PeacePartners, Inc. PeaceBuilder is the renowned anti-violence youth program approved for the federally fund Safe and Drug-Free School Act. (PR)

ON THE NET

www.peacebuilders.com

Asia Institute, co-founded by Mortenson. All CAI projects are initiated by the village community and involve community participation and funding to complete the project.

"Help Others" is a PeaceBuilders Principle; and raising money to help for other children obtain an education is a proactive way for children to build world peace.

"Children have an innate desire to help others, but they might feel too small to help

NMC-CREES to host banana workshop

The Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and Education Services program will be conducting a two-day Banana Workshop on the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. The workshop, which is open to the general public, will highlight the disease management, maintenance, and care of the varieties of bananas in the CNMI.

The workshop will also host University of California at Davis professor Dr. Ivan Buddenhagen as the guest speaker. Buddenhagen, who holds a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from Oregon State University, has dedicated most of his long career to promoting plant disease resistance and management as well as production and crop improvement of bananas and other tropical crops.

The Banana Workshops will be held on Saipan at the Pacific Islands Club on March 16-17, on Rota at the As Paris Restaurant on March 18-19, and on Tinian at Classroom D at the NMC-Tinian Campus on March 20-21. A registration fee of \$5 is required to attend both days of the workshop session, which will run from 8am to 4:30pm each day. The workshop sessions will consist of presentations in the morning and a field trip to banana farms for a hands-on experience in the afternoon for both days.

For more information about the Banana Workshop or other CREES events and programs, log on to www.nmcnet.edu or www.crees.org or call 234-5498 ext. 1707. (NMC)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

March 10, 1999

Peaceful end to prison siege

A group of inmates assaulted a guard, ransacked a security locker and held police at bay with pistol shots in the first-ever prison standoff to hit Saipan yesterday dawn. The 14-hour siege at the male detention center of the Division of Corrections ended after the 14 inmates, led by William Sablan, surrendered following a dialogue with their families. A Smith and Wesson 9-millimeter gun, which the prisoners took after they ransacked the security locker, was thrown out of the detention center to signify that they were giving up the fight. Department of Public Safety Commissioner Charles Ingram said the 14 inmates surrendered at 3:26 p.m. Aside from Sablan, the other prisoners were Vicente Aldan Jr., Jeffrey Celis, Ryan Babauta, Edwin Blas, Arcel Busto, Roland Kapileo, Sheldon Yano, Saddy Charteron, Chi Chong Wen, Wang Ting Hua, Zhu Zhe We, Wang Jun and Cui Xing Hao.

Banks growth steady despite crisis

Bank loans rose 9.6 percent to \$304.71 million in the last quarter of 1998 compared to the same period the previous year, according to statistics from the Department of Commerce. But officials did not say whether the increase could be attributed to growing demand for cash in light of worsening economic condition or cutback in interest rates that has encouraged people to borrow money. Real estate loans soared 66 percent to \$54.7 million during the same period from \$32.9 million logged in 1997, indicating a massive refinancing of loans by property owners, hardest hit by a plunge in the tourism economy. A big number of commercial and residential spaces have been abandoned by occupants as a result of the business slowdown.

March 10, 2000

Consumer prices up

The regional economic upheavals, which pushed many businesses to the edge, have affected the retail industry in the CNMI as the commerce department recorded a significant increase in the overall consumer price index during the last quarter of 1999, compared with the same period in 1998. A weighted consumer price survey released by the Central Statistics Division of the Department of Commerce for the 4th quarter of 1999 revealed a 3.4 index increase in the five commodity sectors to 269.6 from the previous year's 266.2. The 4th quarter of 1999 tally registered a slight increase for the five commodity groups—food, housing, transportation, apparel & upkeep, and health & recreation—at 1.1 index points when compared with the previous quarter's 268.5 points.

Bill seeks inclusion of diabetes in health insurance coverage

A Senate proposal will require health insurance providers on the island to include people with diabetes in their coverage in order to avoid complications and bring down medical care costs. The legislation, offered by Senate President Paul A. Manglona, is expected to be tackled at today's session of the upper house to be held on Rota. The Diabetes Health Maintenance Act of 2000 will ensure accessibility by diabetic patients in the CNMI to necessary supplies and equipment as well as health care for their treatment.

March 10, 2003

CNMI anticipates fewer visitors this March

After posting an all-time high visitor arrival in January, the Commonwealth is projecting a diminishing number of visitors this month, as the CNMI's premier tourism market-Japan-projects a downtrend in outbound travel due to the threat of war and the crisis brought on by the revival of North Korea's nuclear program. Reduction in Japanese outbound travel is expected to impact on various tourism destinations in the world, as the trend veers away from the strong performance of Japanese outbound travel market in the last quarter of 2002. Last year, the number of traveling Japanese reached some 16.514 million. Based on projections by the Marianas Visitors Authority, however, visitor arrivals to the Commonwealth would still increase to 39,897 by the end of this month, up by 5.36 percent compared to that of the same period last year. This projection, though, pales in comparison to January's percentage growth at 38.56. Visitors in January reached 53,625, the highest monthly figure since 1997.

Island Snapshots



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

From left, CNMI Chief Justice Miguel Demapan, CNMI Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert Naraja, and Justice John Atalig Manglona present the Judiciary's gifts to the Talor family during the memorial service for the late Chief Justice Marty W. K. Taylor, held March 5, 2009, in the CNMI Supreme Court.



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Tim Villagomez join CNMI Chief Justice Miguel Demapan, other justices and judges during the memorial service for the late Chief Justice Marty W. K. Taylor on March 5, 2009, in the CNMI Supreme Court.



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

RB Camacho presents Celina Deleon Guerrero Diaz with a municipal council resolution honoring her husband, the late Chief Justice Marty W. K. Taylor, on March 5, 2009, in the CNMI Supreme Court.



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial embraces a grief-stricken Celina Deleon Guerrero Diaz after the presentation of a resolution honoring the late Chief Justice Marty W. K. Taylor on March 5, 2009, in the CNMI Supreme Court, as Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez, left, looks on. Taylor died Feb. 18, 2009.



BIRTHDAY GIRL

Cyrene Saulog enjoys her birthday cake with her dad Chito during her 4th birthday celebration in San Antonio Feb. 27.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



DOUBLE CELEBRATION

Happy birthday to Reyanna Eiko "Princess Nana" P. Susulin and also to Grandpa Frank "Ku" Palacios, who are both celebrating their birthday today, March 10, 2009. Greetings come from the entire family.



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Family members, judges, justices, lawmakers, ranking government officials, and Judiciary staff have their picture taken with the covered urn carrying the ashes of the late Chief Justice Marty W. K. Taylor, after a memorial service held March 5, 2009, in the CNMI Supreme Court.



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Rep. Heinz Hofschneider, left, and House Speaker Arnold Palacios, center, present Celina Deleon Guerrero Diaz with a House of Representatives resolution honoring the late Chief Justice Marty W. K. Taylor during a memorial service on March 5, 2009, in the CNMI Supreme Court.



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Sen. Paul Manglona presents Celina Deleon Guerrero Diaz with a resolution honoring the memory of her husband, the late Chief Justice Marty W. K. Taylor, during a memorial service hosted by the Commonwealth Judiciary March 5, 2009, in the CNMI Supreme Court.



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Commonwealth lawmakers sit together during the memorial service for the late Chief Justice Marty W. K. Taylor, held March 5, 2009, in the CNMI Supreme Court.

PGFC AWARDEE

Arvin Dayao shows off his medal and ribbon after winning third place in Impromptu Speaking and 5th place in the Reader's Forum during the final round of the regional Primary Grade Forensic Conference held Saturday, March 7, 2009, at Marianas High School.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

The storm

We have no idea whether this economic crisis will be equal to, milder than or worse than the Great Depression. But evidence of extraordinary, historic distress is growing. The Dow Jones industrial average has slumped 54 percent in the past 16 months. General Electric, Berkshire Hathaway and Hewlett-Packard—proud flagships of U.S. capitalism—have lost half or more of their market value since 2007. General Motors? Its auditors say that there's "substantial doubt" about its viability, despite billions in government aid; U.S. auto sales are running well below the minimum that GM and other automakers need to survive. Unemployment is at 8.1 percent and rising. As bad as things are here, they are worse almost everywhere else. Japan's gross domestic product plunged almost 13 percent in the last three months of 2008, double the U.S. rate. Several Eastern European countries seem about to go the way of Iceland.

The risks—economic, social, and political—of an unchecked global downturn should not be underestimated. The essence of the problem is that the financial system has quit doing the job upon which all other economic activity depends: converting savings into capital. Known as "financial intermediation," this process is to the economy what the circulation of blood is to the human body. But because they are illiquid, insolvent or unwilling, neither large commercial banks nor the so-called "shadow banking system"—private equity firms, investment banks, hedge funds and the like—can extend normal levels of credit. If not for the Federal Reserve's aggressive action as "lender of last resort," things would be even worse.

Like a human body on life support, the U.S. economy cannot survive on Fed-generated liquidity indefinitely. Restarting the private financial system is the foundation of economic recovery. It is more urgent than any of the new priorities, however laudable, embodied in President Obama's \$3.6 trillion budget proposal—over which Congress, and legions of lobbyists, are preparing to battle. It is also a condition of realizing any of his long-term goals.

Mr. Obama has set in motion a bank recovery "stress test," to be followed by a public-private partnership aimed at taking toxic assets off the banks' books. The Federal Reserve, too, has started to subsidize private investment in asset-backed securities. We understand that these initiatives won't bear fruit immediately. Yet the president cannot relax his focus in the meantime. Nor can he dismiss the market's negative reaction, justified or not, to his financial rescue plans. For better or worse, stocks are crucial to the well-being of tens of millions of Americans via pension plans, 401(k)s and IRAs.

To restate: America's economy faces disaster; averting it depends on financial rehabilitation. That is government's most urgent task—as urgent, in its way, as responding to Pearl Harbor or Sept. 11, 2001. For the president, this does not mean abandoning all other tasks and priorities. It does mean subordinating them to the task that matters most: ensuring that his understaffed team is putting as many resources as possible toward financial recovery and being ready to adjust his plans if, as seems likely, his budget forecasts soon prove overly rosy. For his opposition, it does not mean abandoning principle. It does mean working with the president for the good of the nation, even at the expense of partisan gain.

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How to fight a depression

By MARK NELSON
SPECIAL TO THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

In recent months it has become almost a reflex for Republicans to dismiss President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal as a dismal failure of the Democrats—a "jihad against private enterprise" as Fox News' Britt Hume put it recently.

But Roosevelt's spending plan, unlike President Barack Obama's, had widespread Republican support. In fact, he was criticized in some quarters for not spending more. And one of his chief critics was a prominent Republican.

On March 6, 1935, the head of the Federal Reserve, Marriner Eccles, issued a stern warning to Roosevelt: Given the "totally inadequate" amount of money that the administration was prepared to spend to jump-start the economy, there was no reason "to expect any substantial improvement."

Eccles, a self-described "child of the Republican Party," then sounded a prophetic note: "If we spend some every year, but not sufficient to give the required stimulus to private expenditures, we can build up a large debt and still not be out of the Depression."

Thus, Eccles suggested, "the safest policy is the boldest policy."

Those words came to mind in February when not a single Republican member of the House of Representatives and only three Republicans in the Senate voted for the stimulus package pushed by Obama.

FDR named Eccles to the Fed in 1934 and designated him as the central bank's first chairman in its newly reconstituted form in 1935. Eccles personally drafted the bill that brought this about.

Eccles—a successful Mormon businessman from Utah, a self-described "tame millionaire" and capitalist—had a knack for issuing economic pronouncements that appeared to possess the ring of old-fashioned horse sense. He was that rarest of animals—a New Dealer who could meet a payroll.

Eccles derived the bulk of his intellectual sustenance, he would insist, not from the progressive theorists of his age but from that patron saint of free-market enthusiasts, Adam Smith. By titling his seminal work *The Wealth of Nations*, Smith "asserted the paramount standard of the national welfare, and not the wealth of men, as the one by which all economic activity was to be judged," Eccles said.

Eccles entered the national spotlight in early 1933, when he testified before the Senate Finance Committee as a private citizen. There, he deemed it "incomprehensible" that Americans continued to suffer from an economic collapse that the federal government surely could end. Still, a reporter from *The New York Times* observed that the only time the intense banker smiled was when he announced, "I am a capitalist."

Indeed, it was Eccles' credentials as a rough-and-tumble member of the American business scene that furnished his confidence while confronting his favorite audience: hostile Republicans.

In the spring of 1935, Eccles addressed the American Bankers Association and castigated the bankers' hesitancy to loan. The Re-

construction Finance Corp. had purchased preferred stock in half the U.S. banks. If they wanted the government to get out of business and banking, Eccles told his audience, they must themselves get in.

Eccles was difficult to categorize. A *Fortune* magazine article in April 1934 described him accurately as a "Utah banker with a special point of view." But in the end, his credo for government's proper role in an economic downturn was quite simple: "generating a maximum degree of private spending through a minimum of public spending."

He was aware, of course, that this "minimum" amount could well necessitate massive government deficits.

Indeed, within months of his arrival in Washington, Eccles, then working for the Treasury Department, oversaw the creation of a program that might possibly be considered the most successful example of this principle in all of American history: the National Housing Act.

Eccles estimated that nearly 30 percent of the nation's unemployed were directly engaged in construction activities. He recognized that renewed housing construction would have an enormous ripple effect on related industries; everything from lumberyards to drapery manufacturers stood to benefit.

The National Housing Act set the stage for this possibility by revolutionizing the home financing structure. By the close of the 1930s, a low-interest, 30-year mortgage with a 10 percent down payment—terms that were virtually unheard of previously—was becoming commonplace.

Throughout the decade, however, the reluctance of the Federal Housing Administration to even remotely approach the act's full potential was a source of unending frustration to Eccles. Before an assembly of Ohio businessmen in the late 1930s, he publicly took the government to task by noting that had U.S. residential construction kept pace with Britain's, some 3.5 million homes would have been built instead of 700,000. Had this been achieved, and had the Works Projects Administration paid its work force considerably more than subsistence wages, Eccles was convinced, full employment could have been achieved years before the onset of World War II.

The Depression, he would lament in his memoir, was fought "a drop at a time" when what was needed was "a tidal wave."

One suspects that Eccles would be disheartened that far too many Republicans have seen fit to meet today's economic crisis with some of the same shopworn shibboleths that resounded throughout his day (witness Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal's response on behalf of the Republican Party to Obama's address to Congress and the nation).

Eccles would remind them, no doubt, that "fighting a depression is like jumping an abyss."

"If the cleft is 10 feet wide," Eccles pointed out, "even a nine-foot jump is worse than no effort at all."

Nelson is a doctoral candidate in history at Claremont Graduate University and an adjunct faculty member at Pepperdine University, both in Southern California.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

What's in a name? Facebook has the answer

WASHINGTON—What Caitlin wanted did not seem that hard. She had signed up for Facebook after she married, as Caitlin Shaw. Now, to make it easier for old friends to find her, she wanted to add her maiden name. Her maiden name is Batman.

Facebook's name-change procedure suddenly required superhuman effort.

Because after Caitlin Batman Shaw, a mental health therapist in Arlington, Va., submitted the brief online form, she received an automated response rejecting her. The faceless gatekeepers of Facebook had decided her name could not possibly be *real*.

Batman Shaw appealed, and was rejected. Appealed, rejected. "The process took me three weeks" and several e-mail queries, she says, before she was finally able to use her full legal name.

She can join the Yodas, the Christmases, the Beers, the Pancakes and all of the other wannabe Facebookers whose online rejections represent the latest in a lifetime of name shame. And really, what's the point of Facebook if you can't be yourself?

"Try making a reservation at restaurants," says Tim Six. "I'd like a table for Six at 5 for three." His life reads like an extended "Who's on First?" routine, so the Springfield, Va., software developer was hardly surprised when Facebook rejected his application for an account.

The sad, sad stories of the denied.

"I've heard every Superman joke known to exist," says Becky Super. "People misspell it. People mispronounce it. People say it 'Supper.' " "People say they've never met anyone else with that last name—and how could they, when Facebook denied the existence of not only Super, a Lorto, Va., landscape designer, but her extended family?

"I think they think we're trying to run a breakfast scam or something," says Bess Pancake, who, along with her sister and father (a former Washington Post editor) spent days trying to convince customer service that she was not a waffle shop on the prowl (Relationship Status: It's sticky).

Super, Six and Pancake were all eventually awarded accounts after appealing their rejections with Facebook, but that doesn't address the real indignity.

People like them have endured decades of name-related annoyance. (*No, clever sir. No one else has ever suggested that it would be funny if my first name were Five. You are a genius.*) Perhaps they

experienced childhood ostracism or contemplated name changes. And when they accepted their own quirky identity—to share it with the world and connect via Facebook like 175 million other people—they were prevented from joining the virtual sandbox. Grade school all over again.

"You don't grow up with a last name like Kissar without developing a sense of humor and an appreciation for the absurd," says Keith Kissar, an Oregon librarian. Facebook, however, is "clearly not in touch with the sometimes eccentric names that people have."

Facebook, via e-mails (of course), won't say how many names are on its blocked list or how often names are rejected. It occasionally happens when it appears the chances of fraud are greater than the chances that someone is really named, say, Seymour Butts. A name like Batman gets flagged by Facebook because, writes spokeswoman Meredith Chin, the number of real Batmans is probably "fewer than the number of people who could potentially misuse the name on the site." Applications coming from official-sounding e-mail addresses (batman@harvard.edu) are less likely to be rejected than those from random ones.

The network is based on "real people making real connections," according to a statement from another spokeswoman, Kathleen Loughlin, and so the company has various safeguards to prevent those saboteurs of the online world—impersonators and trolls.

There have been examples of deceit on Facebook. Last year, a university dean created an account under the name "Pedro Amigo" to spy on students, and a Moroccan engineer was arrested for impersonating Prince Moulay Rachid.

But really ... Pancake?

Often, the rejection can be overturned with a few e-mails to customer service, sometimes resulting in a nice explanation and apology: "The name 'Yoda,' also being the name of a popular Star Wars character, is on this list of blocked names," read a helpful e-mail sent to author Hiroko Yoda after her name was finally accepted.

But sometimes the back-and-forth seems too daunting, and Facebook users resort to evasive tactics:

There are several Facebook users with the pathetic, crippled surname "LChristmas," because "Christmas" is sometimes a blocked name. Jeff College, a student at Messiah College in Pennsylvania, craftily became "Jeff College" in order to join "Facebook Hates My Name," a Facebook group containing College and a guy going by "Chris Blue."



By **MONICA HESSE**

(c) 2009, The Washington Post

After several failed exchanges with customer service, Miranda Batman—no relation to Caitlin—of Indiana decided her real name wasn't worth pursuing. Facebook had requested she fax a copy of her driver's license, and she worried about security.

Instead, Miranda signed up for an account as "Miranda Stewart," using her husband's bachelor surname. (He took on Batman when they got married because, well, wouldn't you?) Facebook immediately accepted the fake name. "Which is so ironic," the nursing student says. "Because that's what they're trying to" prevent. The only way for Miranda to overcome accusations of fraud was by ... committing fraud.

The longer that Miranda held onto the fake-name account, the more ridiculous it seemed. Her friends—the ones she'd joined Facebook to reconnect with—knew her as Miranda Batman, and were searching for her under that name. As Miranda Stewart, she couldn't connect with anyone. Finally, a lawyer friend agreed to intercede on her behalf, and after a few legalese e-mails, Miranda was awarded the right to use her own name.

It felt like a coup, but anyone who has spent much time on the site will wonder how it could have become such an ordeal to begin with. For all its safety walls, Facebook appears to be home to some people with very ... interesting ... names: Starkiller Unleashed. Dennis Ilovfakemiddlenames Lewis. Mojo Martini. Heywood Jablomie—more than 30 of them.

In a tucked-away Facebook forum, dozens of users complain that they are having trouble altering their names. Many protest that Facebook won't accept their real, legal names. But then there are also complaints like this: "Recently, my friend got into my account and changed my name to Bonquiqui Shiquavius," writes one forlorn user. "I have no idea why Facebook accepted this."

Bloggers can't fill the gap left by shrinking press corps

Packs of lobbyists fill two rooms outside the House and Senate chambers in Richmond, Va., every afternoon, watching the proceedings on big video screens, zapping legislators with e-mails the instant the lobbyists sense that one of their bills might be in trouble. The interest groups that hire lobbyists can rest easy; they've got the legislature covered.

Down the hall, the people's representatives have a hangout of their own, the press room. But there, nearly half the desks are empty. Reporters have been called home, reassigned, bought out, laid off. Only one TV station in Virginia still has a reporter at the capital. Many newspapers have decided to cover the capital by phone, if at all.

"Just look around—it's dismal," says Bob Lewis, the Associated Press's veteran Richmond correspondent. A decade ago, he had twice as many colleagues covering state government. "And it's not just the bodies that are gone—it's the institutional memory and knowledge."

Warren Fiske of the *Virginian-Pilot*, who has covered Richmond for 22 years, is being required to take a week off as part of his newspaper's cost-cutting furlough of all reporters. Michael Sluss from the *Roanoke Times* had to miss a day last week because of his paper's furlough. "I've never even taken a sick day in my nine years here," he says.

A similar emptying is evident in Annapolis, Md., where the number of reporters covering Maryland's legislature has "declined by a good half in the last two years," says Tom Stuckey, who covered the State House for 42 years before retiring from the Associated Press in 2007.

Across the nation, it's not just that fewer reporters are covering state government; newspapers and TV stations are also devoting far less space and time to that news.

Does that mean citizens are less well-informed? Do blogs and other new media fill in where old media are cutting back? Is it really a loss if reporters cover fewer legislative debates?

"We used to sit here and it was a typing contest," Lewis says. "A lot of those process stories had a very small audience."

"When we had four people here for AP, we covered every floor debate, every vote," Stuckey says. "I'm not sure much quality was

lost when we cut back to two people. We focused more on what it all means than on the daily politics."

In one hour in the Virginia House the other day, I watched debates on raising the cost of vanity license plates (the No's won), letting employers pay workers with debit cards rather than paychecks (Yeses won), and making it a felony to hang a noose on someone's property (approved). Hardly earth-shattering issues, but each has an impact on people's lives. Yet none got any press; a couple of years ago, they would have.

"The smaller the press corps gets, the more you see personality stories rather than pieces about what is at stake for people," says Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine. "Smoking in restaurants is always going to get covered, but now, when we make big changes in mental health or foster care, nobody covers it. That has a real impact: It would be hard for campaigns to get even more superficial, but they might."

"Time is much more precious now," Fiske says. The *Virginian-Pilot* has gone from a five-person capital bureau a decade ago to two full-time reporters, with one more during the session. "When we had the larger bureaus, you could do the good investigative piece. Most sessions, somebody would find someone doing something wrong. Now, we can only really cover the flow of legislation."

Even that flow is more constricted. "There are issues that just don't get covered anymore," says Virginia Lt. Gov. Bill Bolling. "What you want is an informed and engaged population, but with less manpower and less space, there just isn't the opportunity to talk about many topics that lie beneath the marquee issues."

At many papers, including *The Post*—which has maintained its longtime staffing of two-person bureaus in each capital, with a third reporter added when the legislatures are in session—much state news now appears only online. Editors say that's a way to serve the public with targeted reports that aren't subject to space limitations. "Because of the Web, we've actually increased the number of words that we write about state government and politics," says Robert McCartney, *The Post's* assistant managing editor for metro news. Reporters who may find it harder to get stories into the paper write in more detail, often several times a day, for the



By **MARC FISHER**

(c) 2009, The Washington Post

Virginia Politics and Maryland Moment blogs.

Critics say that shift serves only the elite that's intently interested in state news, not the broader audience. "The insiders are still getting a full report on the blogs, but the rest of us see only what we want to see instead of the news we need to see," says Bob Gibson, executive director of the Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership at the University of Virginia and a former politics reporter for the *Daily Progress* in Charlottesville.

Many bloggers say that far from being able to replace professional reporters, they actually suffer from the diminished flow of state news. "What I can't offer on my blogs is the relationships, the institutional memory, the why, the history that reporters who know the capital can bring to their stories," says Waldo Jaquith, who blogs on Virginia politics and runs a site, RichmondSunlight.com, that tracks every bill. "Newspapers can describe the candidates for governor in a more balanced, deeper way because you don't have a dog in the race. We bloggers do."






A combination of media revolution and economic collapse is dismantling our news infrastructure, especially at the state and local levels. "Someday, people will wake up to the depletion of the press corps," Gibson says. "I don't know if the result will be corruption or demagoguery, but the interests of the people are not being represented anymore."

But as long as people buy property, look for jobs, send kids to school and pay taxes, they will need credible information about state government. Something will rise to fill the news vacuum, someday. In the meantime, the lobbyists are getting the news they need. The voters, not so much.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

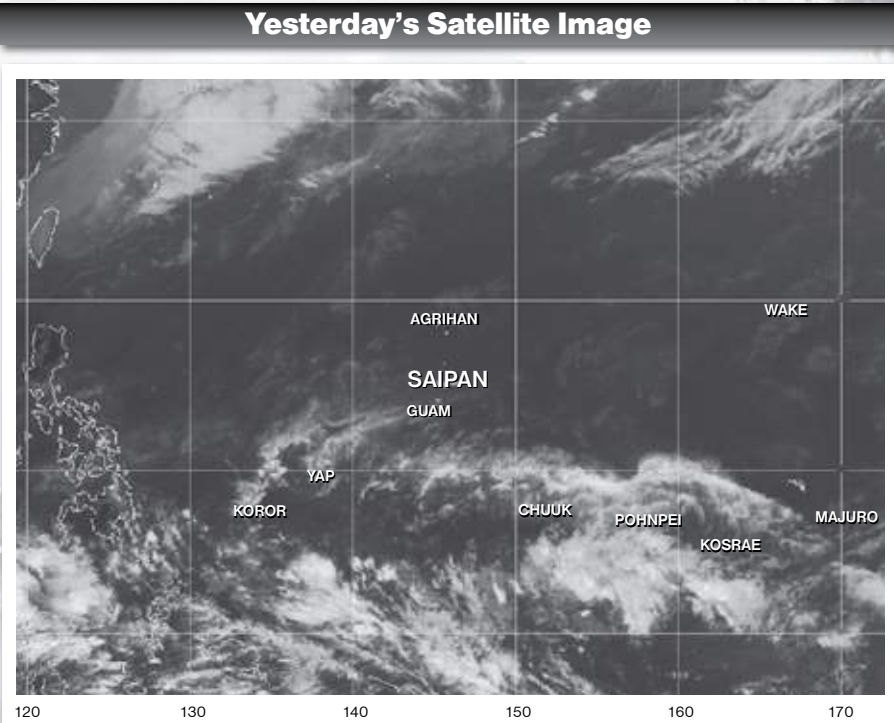
5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°

Micronesia		
Guam and Rota	Sunny	▲84 ▼75
Palau	Cloudy	▲88 ▼77
Yap	Showers	▲86 ▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲88 ▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85 ▼76
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲89 ▼77
Majuro	Rain	▲84 ▼75

Around The Globe		
Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲67 ▼58
Beijing	Partly Sunny	▲50 ▼30
Hong Kong	Showers	▲73 ▼63
Honolulu	Showers	▲74 ▼68
London	Showers	▲52 ▼37
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲67 ▼48
Manila	Partly Sunny	▲89 ▼74
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲73 ▼62
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲82 ▼66
New York	Showers	▲45 ▼37
Osaka	Partly Sunny	▲53 ▼39
Paris	Rain	▲48 ▼38
Pusan	Mostly Cloudy	▲61 ▼40
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲55 ▼44
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲47 ▼25
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲60 ▼42
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲50 ▼25
Tokyo	Partly Sunny	▲57 ▼41
Washington, DC	Rain	▲49 ▼45

Tides		
Saipan Harbor		
12:11 AM Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet
7:05 AM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
12:44 PM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
5:59 PM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, MARCH 9, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A near-equatorial trough extends eastward from south of Mindanao to 1N130E to end at EQ140E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are occurring along the trough axis well south of Koror and Yap between the equator and 5N from 133E to 142E. Trade-wind convergence is combining with upper-level divergence to produce scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms south of Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae within 135 miles of a line from 1N147E to 4N154E to 3N161E to 1N168E. Scattered showers are seen over Tarawa and Butaritari atolls within 115 miles of a line from 1N170E to 4N180.

Sunrise/Sunset			Moonrise/Moonset		
Today	6:29 AM	6:26 PM	Today	5:39 PM	5:30 AM
Wednesday	6:28 AM	6:27 PM	Wednesday	6:35 PM	6:11 AM
Thursday	6:27 AM	6:27 PM	Thursday	7:29 PM	6:51 AM
Friday	6:26 AM	6:27 PM	Friday	8:23 PM	7:31 AM
Saturday	6:26 AM	6:27 PM	Saturday	9:16 PM	8:12 AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

- PICTURES**
- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
 - BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
 - BUSINESS
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
 - SAMUT SARI
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
 - TRAVELOGUE
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.
- ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

- REQUIREMENTS**
- For pictures:**
- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
 - Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
- For announcements:**
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

- the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.
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- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
 - Fax: (670) 235-3740
 - Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
 - Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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 - The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
 - For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 1, 2009					
DEPARTURES			ARRIVALS		
Saipan-Rota			Rota-Saipan		
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm 1,7	CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am 5,6
Saipan-Guam			Guam-Saipan		
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am Daily	CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am 1,2,3,4,7
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am Daily	CO9598	2:30am	4:00am 5,6 via Rota
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm 1,7 via Rota	CO9596	7:00am	7:50am Daily
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm 2,3,4,5,6	CO9600	10:20am	11:10am Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm Daily	CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm Daily	CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm Daily	CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm Daily
Saipan-Narita			Narita-Saipan		
NW 099	5:00am	7:35am Daily	NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm Daily
NW 078	8:20am	1:30pm 2,3,4,5,6,7	NW 077	6:25pm	1:20am+1 2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm Daily	NW 100	8:45pm	1:10am+1 Daily
Guam-Narita			Narita-Guam		
NW 73	4:10pm	7:00pm Daily	NW 74	9:45am	2:20pm Daily
NW 81	3:55pm	6:55pm Daily	NW 82	10:30am	3:10pm Daily
Saipan-Osaka			Osaka-Saipan		
OZ 119	4:00am	6:40am 1,4,6	OZ 120	9:50pm	2:20am+1 3,5,7
NW 083	4:30pm	7:20pm Daily	NW 084	10:40am	3:05pm Daily
Guam-Osaka			Osaka-Guam		
NW 79	4:45pm	7:35pm Daily	NW 80	10:30am	3:00pm Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			Nagoya-Saipan		
NW 078	8:20am	11:05am Daily	NW 077	9:00pm	1:20am+1 Daily
Guam-Nagoya			Nagoya-Guam		
NW 23	4:30pm	7:20pm Daily	NW 24	10:00am	2:30pm Daily
Saipan-Incheon			Incheon-Saipan		
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am 1	OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm Daily
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7	OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1 7
OZ 119	4:00am	11:25am 1,4,6 via Osaka	OZ 120	7:10pm	2:20am+1 3,5,7 via Osaka
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm Daily	OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6
Saipan-Busan			Busan-Saipan		
OZ 608	3:20am	6:50am 1,4,5,7	OZ 607	9:00pm	2:10am+1 3,4,6,7
Saipan-Shanghai			Shanghai-Saipan		
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am 2,6	FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1 1,5
Rota-Guam			Guam-Rota		
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm 1,7	CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am 5,6
Guam-Palau			Palau-Guam		
CO 953	7:40pm	8:40pm 1,7	CO 954	2:30am	5:25am 1,2
CO 893	5:50pm	6:50pm 3,5	CO 892	2:35am	5:30am 4,6
Palau-Manila			Manila-Palau		
CO 893	7:35pm	9:10pm 3,5	CO 892	10:10pm	1:50am+1 3,5
Guam-Manila			Manila-Guam		
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm 3,5 via Koror	CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1 3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm Daily	CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1 Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am 1,2,4,6,7	PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1 1,3,5,6,7
Nagoya-Manila			Manila-Nagoya		
NW 71	8:40pm	11:55pm Daily	NW 72	6:30am	11:05am Daily
Incheon-Hongkong			Hongkong-Incheon		
OZ 721	9:20am	12:00pm Daily	OZ 724	12:30am	4:50am Daily
OZ 723	7:45pm	10:35pm Daily	OZ 7183	12:45am	5:05am 1,4,6
OZ 7173	8:00pm	10:50pm 5,7	OZ 722	1:30pm	5:45pm Daily
Narita-Manila			Manila-Narita		
NW 1	7:00pm	10:55pm Daily	NW 2	7:45am	12:40pm Daily

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily	FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily	FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily	FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily	Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
Guam-Rota				FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily	FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily	FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily	FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily	FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily	FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily	FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily	FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily	FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily				
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Business

Recession on track to be longest in postwar period

WASHINGTON (AP)—Factory jobs disappeared. Inflation soared. Unemployment climbed to alarming levels. The hungry lined up at soup kitchens.

It wasn't the Great Depression. It was the 1981-82 recession, widely considered America's worst since the depression.

That painful time during Ronald Reagan's presidency is a grim marker of how bad things can get. Yet the current recession could slice deeper into the U.S. economy.

If it lasts into April—as it almost surely will—this one will go on record as the longest in the postwar era. The 1981-82 and 1973-75 recessions each lasted 16 months.

Unemployment hasn't reached 1982 levels and the gross domestic product hasn't fallen quite as far. But the hurt from this recession is spread more widely and uncertainty about the country's economic health is worse today than it was in 1982.

Back then, if someone asked if the nation was about to experience something as bad as the Great Depression, the answer was, "Quite clearly, 'No,'" said Murray Weidenbaum, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers in the Reagan White House.

"You don't have that certainty today," he said. "It's not only that the downturn is sharp and widespread, but a lot of people worry that it's going to be a long-lasting, substantial downturn."

For months, headlines have compared this recession with the one that began in July 1981 and ended in November 1982.

■ In January, reports showed 207,000 manufacturing jobs van-



In this April 6, 1983, file photo some of an anticipated group of 10,000 unemployed, wait in the steady rain for President Ronald Reagan to arrive at his hotel in Pittsburgh, Pa., as he visits the city to speak at the National Conference on the Dislocated Worker.

White House budget director says economy is 'weak'

WASHINGTON (AP)—The White House's top budget official declared on Sunday that "fundamentally, the economy is weak" while saying the administration's own financial predictions could need a revision by midyear.

Peter Orszag, President Barack Obama's Office of Management and Budget director, said in television interviews that the economic downturn has been years in the making

but cautioned that the new administration wasn't yet looking at a second economic stimulus package. Orszag said the already-in-place \$787 billion stimulus should have a chance to work before officials ask Congress to consider a sequel.

"I don't think we should be chasing our tail, constantly revising assumptions," Orszag said. "Let's see what happens, let it work. We'll

have a mid-session review later in the year. We'll have an opportunity to revise the assumptions at that point."

That revision, though, seemed unavoidable.

Obama's budget assumes the economy will grow at about 3.2 percent. Given climbing unemployment, shrinking credit and a general frustration over a crumbling economy, that now seems unrealistic.

Orszag acknowledged the

federal budget is "uglier than we would like," but he blamed most of the spending on last year's budget process and defended Obama's decision to go forward with it without seeking more changes.

"This is like your relief pitcher coming in into the ninth inning and wanting to redo the whole game," he said. "Next year, we will be the starting pitcher and the game is going to be completely different."

After 60 years Circuit City powers down

RICHMOND, Va. (AP)—What began 60 years ago as a humble television store in this sleepy Southern capital ended Sunday as Circuit City closed its doors for good—its 567 remaining U.S. stores to be left broom clean and vacant.

For the last month and a half, a group of four liquidators have conducted going-out-of-business sales for what was the nation's second-largest consumer electronics retailer, selling its remaining \$1.7 billion worth of inventory weeks sooner than expected.

In its wake Richmond-based

Circuit City Stores Inc. will leave more than 18 million square feet of vacant space in a faltering real estate market. And more than 34,000 employees, some who worked through the liquidation announced in January, will be jobless. Shareholders will likely get nothing and creditors may receive far less than what they are owed.

Circuit City filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in November with hopes of emerging as a stronger company able to compete in the ever-expanding marketplace; shedding its \$2.32

billion in debt and getting out of older real estate.

Major automakers' U.S. sales extended their deep slump in February, putting the industry on track for its worst sales month in more than 27 years.

Struggling homebuilders have just completed the worst year for new home sales since 1982.

There are 12.5 million people out of work today, topping the number of jobless in 1982.

"I think most people think it is worse than 1982," said John Steele Gordon, a financial historian. "I don't think many people think it will be 1932 again. Let us pray. But it's probably going to be the worst postwar recession, certainly."

The 1982 downturn was driven primarily by the desire to rid the economy of inflation. To battle a decade-long bout of high inflation, then-Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker, now an economic adviser to President Barack Obama, pushed interest rates up to levels not seen since the Civil War. The approach tamed inflation, but not without suffering.

Hardest hit was the industrial Midwest; the Pacific Northwest, where the logging industry lagged from construction declines; and some states in the South, where the recession hit late.

Frustrated workers fled to the Sunbelt to find work. In Michigan, which led the nation in jobless workers, newspapers offered idled auto workers free "job wanted" ads in the classified section. Mortgages carried double-digit interest rates. When the 1982 recession ended, the national jobless rate had hit 10.8 percent.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

World Bank says global economy will shrink in 2009

NEW YORK (AP)—The World Bank predicts the global economy will shrink this year for the first time since World War II, and sees trade at its lowest point in 80 years. The World Bank also said Sunday the growing global financial crisis will create a multibillion-dollar financing shortfall for poor and developing nations. A group of 129 countries face a shortfall of \$270 to \$700 billion this year, the World Bank says. It warns international financial institutions will not be able to cover even the low end of that estimate. The bank said only one-quarter of the vulnerable countries will be able to ease the impact of the economic downturn through job creation or "safety net" programs.

Oil rises above \$46 as investors eye OPEC cuts

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices rose to above \$46 a barrel Monday in Asia as investors anticipated another OPEC production cut will shrink global supplies. Benchmark crude for April delivery rose 81 cents to \$46.33 a barrel by midday in Singapore on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Oil prices rose \$1.91 on Friday to settle at \$45.52. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries plans to meet March 15 in Vienna, and some of the group's leaders

have said a production cut is likely. Iranian Oil Minister Gholam Hossein Nozari was quoted by the official IRNA news agency Sunday saying OPEC members have "almost" completely complied with the 4.2 million barrels a day of output quota reductions announced since September. Nozari also said OPEC should coordinate supply policy with non-OPEC producers.

Madoff investors prepare for court confrontation

NEW YORK (AP)—Bernard Madoff has yet to face the many investors he is accused of ripping off in a jaw-dropping Ponzi scheme that amounted to one of the biggest financial frauds in history. The disgraced financier has been insulated from them in his expensive Manhattan apartment, where he has been under house arrest since December. But on Thursday, he's expected to enter a guilty plea in the multibillion-dollar fraud, setting up a dramatic and highly unusual confrontation with the people he is accused of cheating. Late Friday, U.S. District Judge Denny Chin invited victims to address the court after prosecutors submitted papers noting that crime victims have the right to be "reasonably heard at any public proceeding in the district court involving release, plea, sentencing, or any parole proceeding." Typically, victims speak at sentencing hearings, not at ones in which a guilty plea is offered.

Outside buyers drawn to Detroit's foreclosed homes

DETROIT (AP)—Welcome to Landlord Nation, where foreclosure notices are plentiful and for-sale signs offer at least 1,800 homes for under \$10,000 that once were worth at least 10 times more.

In extreme cases, homes are on sale for \$1 or less, which has enticed investors to Detroit from as far away as the United

Kingdom and Australia.

"In the past few months, I've picked up 10 new clients from out of state that are buying in bulk," said Mike Shannon, a suburban Detroit real estate agent. His office specializes in foreclosures in a city that's among the national leaders. "They're coming to us, saying 'Look, I want to buy 50, 100, 1,000.' They want to own

every decent and cheap house they can find."

Despite a stagnant retail housing market, real estate sales of foreclosed homes are booming. Shannon regularly fields calls from eager prospects, and recently sold 30 homes in one day to one buyer. A trio of U.K. investors has bought a half-dozen and plans many more.

Nation

ACROSS THE NATION

Conn. man is cited for owning an endangered ape

STAMFORD, Conn. (AP)—A man already accused of keeping a collection of wild animals including a river otter and a two-toed sloth has been cited for owning an endangered ape. Pierce Onthank, the president of an oil and gas company, is charged with illegal possession of a primate for keeping a siamang, a type of gibbon that is native to rain forests in Malaysia and Indonesia and can weigh up to 30 pounds and stand 3 feet high. Onthank's wife, Susan Onthank, said their 2-year-old siamang, Koby, weighs about 14 pounds and wears diapers. She said her husband would make a statement by Monday, when he's scheduled to be in court for the infraction.

Man charged with killing 4 in home near Birmingham

HUEYTOWN, Ala. (AP)—Police have charged a 24-year-old man with four counts of capital murder in the stabbing deaths of four people in a home near Birmingham. Police chief Chuck Hagler said Scott Lamar Abbott is being held with no bond allowed. Hagler said Abbott slashed and stabbed two men and two women while they slept early Saturday in their home in the suburban Birmingham community of Hueytown. The chief identified the victims as 24-year-old Nika Fandlin, 27-year-old Jeri Cole, 31-year-old William Gilbert and 26-year-old Joshua Gilleo. Police say Abbott acted alone, moving from room to room to kill the victims. Hagler said police believe Abbott was the spurned boyfriend of one of the women who was killed.

Pa. liquor board will teach workers to be bubbly

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP)—Pennsylvania liquor store clerks need to be more bubbly when they're selling Champagne. The state's Liquor Control Board is spending more than \$173,000 to try to make workers friendlier and more well-mannered at the nearly 650 stores it operates. The board says it wants to make sure clerks are saying "hello," "thank you" and "come again" to customers shopping for wine and spirits. It has hired Pittsburgh-based consulting firm Solutions 21 to help coach store managers so they can instruct their clerks on issues such as how to greet customers and where to stand. Training begins this month. Harrisburg good-government activist Eric Epstein calls the idea "a demented interpretation of happy hour." He says it's "a sad state of affairs when you have to train people to be kind and courteous."

Police: Ill. pastor deflected gunshot with Bible

MARYVILLE, Ill. (AP)—A pastor shot and killed during his Sunday sermon deflected the first of the gunman's four rounds with a Bible, spraying a confetti of paper into the air during a horrifying scene that congregants initially thought was a skit, police said.

The gunman strode down the aisle of the sprawling First Baptist Church shortly after 8 a.m. and briefly spoke with The Rev. Fred Winters before pulling out a .45-caliber semiautomatic pistol and shooting at the pastor, Illinois State Police Director Larry Trent said.

"We thought it was part of a drama skit ... when he shot, what you saw was confetti," said congregant Linda Cunningham, whose husband is a minister of adult education at the church. "We just sat there waiting for what comes next, not realizing that he had wounded the pastor."

The weapon jammed before the man could fire again, Trent said. The attacker then pulled out a four-inch knife, stabbing himself and two men who tackled him, he said.

Winters was pronounced dead at Anderson Hospital,



People stand outside of First Baptist Church in Maryville, Ill. Sunday March 8, 2009 after a man killed a pastor and injured others at the church.

hospital spokeswoman Natalie Head said.

Authorities didn't know whether Winters, a married father of two who had led the church for nearly 22 years, and the gunman knew each other. No one at the church seemed to recognize the 27-year-old gunman. Police would not re-

lease his name pending possible charges. "We don't know the relationship (between the gunman and pastor), why he's here or what the circumstances came about that caused him in the first place to be here," said Illinois State Police Master Trooper Ralph Timmins.

The Rev. Mark Jones, an-

other pastor at First Baptist, said he briefly saw the gunman but not the shooting, though he heard a sound like miniature firecrackers.

"We have no idea what this guy's motives were," Jones said outside the church.

Trent did not have details of Winters' conversation with

the gunman.

"Right now all we know is that the suspect said something to the pastor and the pastor said something back," he said.

The gunman and one stabbing victim, 39-year-old Terry Bullard, underwent surgery at St. Louis University Hospital, spokeswoman Laura Keller said. Bullard was in serious condition, she said.

Keller did not release details of the gunman's condition or injuries.

The other victim, Keith Melton, was treated and released from Gateway Regional Medical Center, spokeswoman Kate Al-laria said. A man who answered the phone at a listing for Keith Melton in Troy identified himself as Melton's stepson and said Melton had been stabbed but was going to be fine.

First Baptist had an average attendance of 32 people when Winters became senior pastor in 1987; it now has about 1,200 members, according to the church's Web site. Winters also was former president of the Illinois Baptist State Association and an adjunct professor for Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, according to the site.

Obama to reverse Bush-era stem cell policy

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama's announcement Monday that he is overturning his predecessor's policies toward embryonic stem cells also will include a broad declaration that science—not political ideology—would guide his administration.

Obama planned to reverse President George W. Bush's limits on federally funded stem cell research through the National Institutes of Health and to put in place safeguards through the Office of Science and Technology Policy so that science is protected from political interference. The moves would fulfill a campaign promise.

"We've got eight years of science to make up for," said Dr. Curt Civin, whose research allowed scientists to isolate stem cells and who now serves as the founding director of the University of Maryland Center for Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine. "Now, the silly restrictions are lifted."

Bush limited taxpayer money for stem cell research to a small number of stem cell lines that were created before Aug. 9, 2001. Many of those faced drawbacks. Hundreds more of such lines—groups of cells that can continue to propagate in lab dishes—have been created since then. Scientists say those newer

lines are healthier and better suited to creating treatments for diseases, but they were largely off-limits to researchers who took federal dollars.

"We view what happened with stem cell research in the last administration is one manifestation of failure to think carefully about how federal support of science and the use of scientific advice occurs," said Harold Varmus, a Nobel Prize-winning biologist who is chairman of the White House's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology.

Bush and his supporters said they were defending human life; days-old embryos—typi-

cally from fertility-clinic leftovers otherwise destined to be thrown away—are destroyed for the stem cells.

Obama's advisers sought to downplay the divisions.

"I think we all realize, and the president certainly understands, there are people of good faith on both sides of this issue," said Melody Barnes, the White House's domestic policy adviser. "We recognize there are a range of beliefs on this."

Rep. Eric Cantor, the No. 2 Republican in the House, said the focus should be on the economy, not on a long-simmering debate over stem cells.

Readiness of some rebuilt levees questioned

ST. LOUIS (AP)—With the spring flood season fast approaching, the Army Corps of Engineers insists the earthen levees that were overwhelmed by the Mississippi River last summer are rebuilt and ready. Some people who depend on the levees aren't so sure.

It was nearly nine months ago that the river neared and, in some cases, exceeded the record levels that were reached in the Great Flood of 1993, something many Midwesterners figured they'd never see again. The Mississippi and its tributaries pummeled levees protecting towns and farmland from Iowa south through St. Louis, breaching or overflowing dozens of

the earthen structures.

Corps officials say holes in the levees have been fixed. The Corps has spent some \$64 million so far to fix breaches in about 70 levees in Iowa, Illinois and Missouri.

"It should give them (people protected by levees) a certain level of confidence," says Alan Dooley, a spokesman for the Corps' St. Louis district.

That's little comfort for the local officials worried about whether the repairs go far enough, especially since early spring is the rainiest and most flood-prone time of the year. Local levee officials in the hardest hit states—Iowa, Illinois and Missouri—believe the Corps is moving too slowly to fix the infrastructure.

"We're very concerned," said Stan Rolf, president of the levee district at Winfield, Mo., where a burrowing muskrat caused a breach that eventually flooded 100 homes and damaged nearly 2,000 acres of farmland. "Every farmer is concerned about it. It's our livelihood."

At least for now, the weather outlook appears far more favorable than a year ago, when there was "the perfect setup" for big trouble, according to Bob Holmes, national flood specialist with the U.S. Geological Survey.

That winter's melt-off from huge snowstorms filled the Mississippi and its tributaries and persistent rain saturated the soil. Then a storm in June dumped

more than 10 inches of rain on parts of Iowa and Wisconsin.

"We're not looking at nearly the potential of flooding this year," said Mark Fuchs, a National Weather Service hydrologist. "But there's always the disclaimer: If we have a big (rainfall) event we could always see significant flooding."

One of the local officials still worried about that possibility is Marty Lafary, the board chairman of Henderson County in northwest Illinois. The Mississippi broke one of the levees in the county last June, swamping the tiny village of Gulfport. Water submerged tens of thousands of acres of farmland and one-third of the county's tax base.

AG, Wallace's daughter observe Selma anniversary

SELMA, Ala. (AP)—The nation's first black attorney general and Gov. George C. Wallace's daughter celebrated the Selma-to-Montgomery voting rights march Sunday—44 years after state troopers from her father's administration beat marchers as they started the landmark journey.

Peggy Wallace Kennedy introduced Attorney General Eric Holder at a historic Selma church filled to overflowing.

"It's reconciliation and redemption," Wallace's daughter said.

Selma's annual Bridge Crossing Jubilee, commemorating the 1965 voting rights march, brought together civil rights leaders Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton and Joseph Lowery in addition to the attorney general and several members of Congress, including Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga., who was beaten in the original Selma march. More than a thousand people took part in recreating the march Sunday.

Holder and Kennedy embraced at Brown Chapel AME Church, where marchers organized on March 7, 1965, to begin their 50-mile trek to Montgomery.

A few blocks into the march, they were beaten by state troopers on Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge—an event that became known as "Bloody Sunday."

Asia

NKorea threatens 'war' over satellite shutdown

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea said Monday its armed forces are "fully combat ready" and that they will retaliate against any attempt to intercept its planned satellite launch, which neighboring governments suspect might be a missile test.

The harsh rhetoric came as the United States and South Korea kicked off annual war games involving tens of thousands of troops, which the communist nation has condemned as preparations for an invasion.

The joint drills across South Korea began as concerns mounted that Pyongyang could be gearing up to test-fire a long-range missile capable of reaching U.S. territory. North Korea says what it plans to launch is a communications satellite, but neighboring governments believe it is a cover for a missile test.

"If the enemies recklessly opt for intercepting our satellite, our revolutionary armed forces will launch without hesitation a just retaliatory strike operation not only against all the interceptor means involved but

against the strongholds of the U.S. and Japanese aggressors," the general staff of the North's military said in a statement.

"Shooting our satellite for peaceful purposes will precisely mean a war," said the statement, carried by Pyongyang's

official Korean Central News Agency.

U.S. and Japanese officials have suggested that they might

shoot down a North Korean missile if it's deemed necessary.

The North's military also ordered all personnel to "be fully combat ready" so that they could "deal merciless retaliatory blows" at the enemy, KCNA said in a separate dispatch.

The United States and South Korea have conducted annual military exercises a few times a year for decades, and Pyongyang has routinely condemned them as rehearsals for invasion.

In the run-up to the drills that began on Monday, the North has also stepped up its war rhetoric. Claiming the maneuvers pose grave threats to its security, the North last week threatened South Korean passenger planes flying near its airspace.

Seoul and Washington have repeatedly said the drills, which involve involving its 26,000 military personnel in South Korea, an unspecified number of southern soldiers and a U.S. aircraft carrier, are purely defensive.



South Korean protesters with a North Korean flag and portraits of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il stage a rally against North Korea's recent military policy in Seoul, South Korea, Monday, March 9, 2009.

China: We don't want Western-style democracy

BEIJING (AP)—China will never become a Western-style democracy, the head of the country's rubber-stamp parliament said Monday, an apparent response to renewed calls for political reform from both inside and outside the country.

In an address to the annual nine-day meeting of the National People's Congress, Wu Bangguo laid out extensive arguments seeking to justify China's one-party communist system and draw clear distinc-

tions with multiparty political systems in the West.

China, he said, would never introduce a system of "multiple parties holding office in rotation," nor would it allow a separation of powers among the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government, or a legislature made up of lower and upper houses.

Wu's remarks emphasizing the primacy of the "path of socialism with Chinese characteristics," appeared to be a deliberate rebut-

tal to critics at home and abroad calling for greater liberalization, including legalizing opposition parties and direct elections for legislative bodies.

His remarks on the issue were considerably longer than in last year's address, in which he made only passing reference to China's rejection of separation of powers and a bicameral system.

Wu also appeared to rule out moves toward greater judicial independence, saying the all-powerful Communist Party would

continue to dictate standards and priorities that it expected courts and prosecutors to adhere to.

"The Western model of a legal system cannot be copied mechanically in establishing our own," Wu said.

Wu's address enumerated the work of the NPC's Standing Committee, the 74-member body that handles legislative business when the almost 3,000-member NPC is not in session. NPC members are carefully vetted and mainly

serve to discuss and approve decisions already reached by the party leadership.

Wu said China aimed to establish a "legal system of socialism with Chinese characteristics" by next year, achieved through enacting and revising legislation rather than structural adjustments.

He said top legislative work this year would focus on drawing up laws covering social programs such as health care, pensions and education.

Official: Taiwan wants Chinese military contacts

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Taiwan is working on setting up a think tank to coordinate contacts with the Chinese military, a Defense Ministry official said Monday, in what would be one of the most significant steps so far in rapidly improving relations between the sides.

The official's comments follow last week's assertion by Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao that Beijing is ready to hold talks with Taiwan on political and military issues aimed at ending hostility with the rival island.

Since the inauguration of Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou in May, long-standing tensions between Taiwan and China have begun to recede, prompted by Ma's renunciation of his predecessor's pro-independence policies, and his continuing efforts to deepen the island's economic relations with the mainland.

The Taiwanese Defense Ministry official told The Associated Press that the purpose of the new

liaison organization would be to build mutual trust with the Chinese military "on a step by step basis." He spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject.

"We want to establish a think tank to reduce the unsafe factors in relations between the sides," he said, without elaborating.

He added that the new organization could be part of a research body at a Taiwanese university but said that no final decision had yet been made.

China and Taiwan split amid civil war in 1949. Beijing continues to see the democratic island as part of its territory and has threatened war if it moves to make their break permanent.

Last month the Taiwanese Cabinet-level body responsible for relations with the mainland said that Beijing had some 1,500 missiles aimed at Taiwanese military and civilian targets—an increase of more than 100 since Ma entered office.

Grim struggle continues for women in Afghanistan

KABUL (AP)—On the same day an Afghan female lawmaker announced her candidacy for Afghanistan's presidency, an impoverished widow seeking to escape a life of despair set herself on fire.

With every step forward that women in Afghanistan take, violent incidents highlight the fact many still struggle for basic human rights eight years after the ouster of the conservative Taliban regime.

In a speech commemorating International Women's Day on Sunday, President Hamid Karzai challenged Afghan religious leaders to denounce violence against women and reject traditional practices that treat women as property.

"The forced marriages, the selling of women—these are against Islam," Karzai told some 600 women gathered in a high school auditorium in the capital, Kabul.

The Taliban government that ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001 forced women to stay at

home and banned them from appearing in public without a body-covering burqa.

Much has improved since then: Millions of girls now attend school, and many women own businesses. Of 351 parliamentarians, 89 are women. On Saturday, a female lawmaker, Shalah Attah, said she will run for president in this year's election, now set for August.

But despite those advances, millions of Afghan women still face violence and traditional practices such as the trading of women as brides to settle feuds. Rape reports have increased.

Karzai's speech came one day after a widow in western Afghanistan burned herself alive in what relatives called a desperate move to escape her miserably poor life.

Jan Bibi, 53, lived with family and made a little money washing clothes for neighbors, officials said. On Saturday, she walked into her room, poured gasoline over her body and set it on fire, according to Dad Mohammad,

police chief of Obe district.

The family rushed her to a hospital where she died, Mohammad said.

The incident occurred in an area where scores of women have killed themselves by self-immolation to escape abuse, forced marriages or other oppressive customs. As a widow, Bibi would have been on the bottom rung of traditional Afghan society—undesirable for marriage and unemployable because of her gender.

Even in the cities, where women have made great strides in employment and recognition, there are signs of backsliding in recent years. Karzai noted in his speech that the number of women working in government ministries has actually dropped to 21 percent from an earlier figure of 32 percent.

A U.N. report this week on human rights in Afghanistan said that "threats and intimidation against women in public life or who work outside the home have seen a dramatic increase."

ASIAN BRIEFS

3 Filipino fishermen killed, 2 others kidnapped

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (AP)—Gunmen attacked a fishing boat in the volatile southern Philippines, shooting to death three fishermen and abducting two others, officials said Sunday. Government troops and police were trying to determine who was behind Thursday's attack off Basilan Island, where al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf militants have been blamed for a surge in kidnappings for ransom, navy Commodore Alex Pama said. The gunmen on a motorboat approached the fishing vessel and opened fire. The two surviving fishermen were abducted and the boat's engine and fishing equipment were seized, Basilan Vice Governor Al Rasheed Sakkalahul said. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack. The military and police were searching for those responsible.

Scores die in battle for Sri Lankan rebel enclave

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—Fierce fighting between Sri Lankan troops and ethnic Tamil separatists defending their last remaining enclave has left about 100 rebels dead in two days of fighting, the military said Sunday. The army has ousted the Tamil Tigers from most of their strongholds in an all-out offensive the government hopes will end the South Asian island's 25-year civil war. The rebel holdouts are confined to about 20 square miles (50 square kilometers) of jungle and beach near Mullaittivu on the northeastern coast along with up to 200,000 terrified civilians. Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said Sunday that troops had killed about 100 rebels in a series of clashes in rebel-held territory since Friday, though he cautioned that only about 50 bodies were found.

FBI to help Bangladesh probe border guards' mutiny

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—A team from the FBI will assist Bangladeshi police investigating last month's bloody mutiny by border guards that killed more than 70 people—mostly army officers, a government minister said Sunday. Police also said Sunday that they have so far arrested 36 suspects out of the more than 1,000 border guards charged in the mayhem. The two-day insurrection shook Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's two-month-old elected government and raised tension with the powerful military, which has staged 21 coup attempts in the past. Foreign Minister Dipu Moni said two agents from the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation were expected to arrive late Sunday in the Bangladeshi capital, Dhaka, to make an initial assessment.

World

WORLD BRIEFS

Sudan's president warns foreigners in Darfur

EL FASHER, Sudan (AP)—Sudan's president threatened to kick out more aid groups and expel diplomats and peacekeepers on Sunday during his first trip to Darfur after an international court issued an arrest warrant against him for war crimes there. Sudan has already expelled 13 of the largest aid groups operating in Darfur as part of its defiant response to the International Criminal Court's decision last week to indict him. Sudan has accused them of cooperating with the Netherlands-based ICC. The statements came as the Sudanese army announced it was moving toward putting its army on full alert by mobilizing three-quarters of its troops, according to the Sudan Media Center, a news agency with close links to the government. The army renewed its allegiance to President Omar al-Bashir and said it was ready to confront any possible threat, according to the report, quoting a statement from the army's chief of staff, Gen. Mohammed Nasreddin.

Tsvangirai's absence may leave void in Zimbabwe

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP)—Zimbabwe's prime minister, injured in a car crash that killed his wife, has left for medical treatment in Botswana, leaving no word when he will return to his troubled homeland to try to make a power-sharing deal with his longtime rival work. The effect Prime Minister's Morgan Tsvangirai's absence will have on Zimbabwe's fraught political system when much of the population is suffering from hunger and disease is a matter of speculation. He spent months in Botswana last year, fearing for his life at the height of a standoff with President Robert Mugabe—the man with whom he formed a joint government last month. Tsvangirai arrived in Botswana on Saturday, a day after the crash, according to a spokesman for Botswana's foreign ministry.

Pope to visit Holy Land in May

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Pope Benedict XVI said Sunday he would visit the Holy Land from May 8-15 in the first papal trip to the area since 2000. The visit would be the second official trip by a pope to Israel. Announcing the dates of the long-planned pilgrimage, the pope said he would go to sites Jesus visited and would pray for "the precious gift of unity and peace for the Middle East and all of humanity." Benedict told a crowd gathered in St. Peter's Square for the traditional noontime blessing that he was asking the faithful for their spiritual support for the Holy Land pilgrimage and a trip to Africa from March 17-23. Benedict said the African trip would show "the concrete closeness of myself and of the Church to the Christians and the people of that continent, which is particularly dear to me."

US says 12,000 troops to leave Iraq by September

BAGHDAD (AP)—About 12,000 U.S. soldiers will leave Iraq by September, officials said Sunday, hours after a Baghdad suicide bomber killed about 30 people in a chilling reminder of the nation's still-shaky security.

The withdrawals, which will most likely come from Baghdad and Anbar province, once main battlefields of the war, are the first step in keeping with President Barack Obama's pledge to end America's role in the war.

That would bring U.S. troop levels to more than 120,000—still a substantial force. As part of the drawdown, the U.S. will turn over 74 facilities and areas under its control to the Iraqis by the end of March.

All 4,000 British soldiers remaining in Iraq are also scheduled to leave by September.

A U.S. spokesman, Maj. Gen. David Perkins, said Iraq's security has "greatly improved, moving from a very unstable to a stable position." He said violence was at its lowest level since the summer of 2003.

Sunday's attack was the worst in Baghdad in months, injuring about 60 people beyond the dozens killed. But in a news conference hours later,



Iraqi government spokesman Ali al-Dabbagh, center, speaks during a joint news conference with Maj. Gen. David Perkins, right, and U.S. Embassy spokesman Adam Ereli, left, in Baghdad, Iraq, Sunday, March 8, 2009.

Perkins described it as a sign that U.S.-led coalition forces have militants on the run.

"We know that al-Qaida, although greatly reduced in capability and numbers, still is desperate to maintain relevance here in Iraq," Perkins said.

The suicide bomber detonated his explosives as he drove his motorcycle into a group of people, many of them police

recruits, waiting near a side entrance of Baghdad's main police academy in a mainly Shiite area of the city.

The heavily fortified academy has been hit by several bombings. A Dec. 1 suicide bombing there killed at least 33 and wounded dozens, including four U.S. soldiers and an Iraqi general.

Iraqi and U.S. forces sealed

off the scene Sunday, allowing only ambulances and fire engines to enter. Nervous Iraqi troops fired in the air to prevent onlookers and reporters from getting too close.

Haitham Fadhel said he was standing in one of three lines of recruits arriving for their first day of special guard training courses. He was knocked unconscious and wounded

by shrapnel, but called himself lucky. Two friends were killed.

"We were feeling secure as we were waiting in a well-guarded area," said Fadhel, 24. "Before the explosion occurred I heard a loud shout saying, 'Stop, stop, where are you going?' Seconds later, a huge explosion shook the area."

He added, "I am just wondering how a big security breach can occur in such a secured area."

No group claimed responsibility for the blast, but suicide bombings are the signature attack of Sunni religious extremists, including al-Qaida.

Iraqi officials provided conflicting casualty tolls, as is common in the chaotic aftermath of bombings.

Three medical officials and one police officer in the area said 32 were killed, including 19 recruits, nine policemen and four traffic police, with about 60 others wounded.

An Interior Ministry official said the death toll was 28 and 57 were wounded. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to release the information.

Pledges of peace after fatal N. Ireland attack

ANTRIM, Northern Ireland (AP)—Catholic and Protestant congregations prayed together for peace Sunday after IRA dissidents killed two British soldiers as they collected pizzas—the first deadly attack on Northern Ireland security forces in 12 years.

The leaders of the territory's Catholic-Protestant administration warned that Irish Republican Army dissidents were trying to tear apart their young coalition and drag Northern Ireland back toward its bloody past. The leaders postponed a U.S. trip to deal with the crisis but expect to meet with President Barack Obama on St. Patrick's Day as planned.

Police said two dissidents with assault rifles opened fire Saturday night from a car as four soldiers—who were just hours away from being deployed to Afghanistan—met two Domino's Pizza delivery men at the entrance of the Massereene army barracks in Antrim, west of Belfast.

All four were wounded, two fatally. Also shot were the two delivery men, a local teenager who was seriously wounded and a 32-year-old Polish immigrant left in critical condition.

An Irish newspaper, the Sunday Tribune, said it received a claim of responsibility in a phone call from the Real IRA splinter group. The newspaper

said the caller, who used a code word to verify he was authorized to speak for the outlawed gang, defended the shooting and described the pizza delivery men as "collaborators of British rule in Ireland."

The Real IRA was responsible for the deadliest terror attack in Northern Ireland history: a 1998 car bombing of the town of Omagh that killed 29 people, mostly women and children.

The senior Catholic in the power-sharing coalition, Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness, said dissidents were trying to rekindle sectarian bloodshed and force Britain to resume sterner security policies. McGuinness, a former IRA commander, called the violence "absolutely futile."

The IRA killed nearly 1,800 people from 1970 to 1997 in a failed effort to force Northern Ireland out of the United Kingdom and into the Republic of Ireland. The IRA disarmed and renounced violence in 2005, but several shadowy splinter groups have tried to continue the campaign.

Both McGuinness and First Minister Peter Robinson, the Protestant leader of the 22-month-old coalition, vowed that the attack would not weaken power-sharing, the central accomplishment of the U.S.-brokered Good Friday peace accord in 1998.

Mexico morgues crowded with dead from escalating drug war

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico (AP)—Death froze his exhausted face. The attackers lashed or punctured nearly every part of his body. Then they cut off the dead man's head, wrapped it in a plastic grocery bag and dumped it with his body between two tractor-trailers on a city street.

As with most murders in Ciudad Juarez, police found no witnesses, no weapons. Only the battered corpse on the steel coroner's table carries clues to who he was and how he died.

"Every organ speaks," says Dr. Maria Concepcion Molina, who gently removes packing tape from the head of her

third decapitated victim in a week. The dead man's slack mouth and eyes still seem to pray for relief.

Bodies stacked in the morgues of Mexico's border cities tell the story of an escalating drug war. Drug violence claimed 6,290 people last year, double the previous year, and more than 1,000 in the first eight weeks of 2009.

Each bullet wound or broken bone details the viciousness with which the cartels battle a government crackdown and each other. Slain policemen lie next to hit men in the rows of zipped white bags.

Israel believes Iran can build nuclear weapons

JERUSALEM (AP)—Iran is now capable of producing atomic weapons, Israel's top military intelligence officer said Sunday, sounding the highest-level warning that Israel's arch-enemy has achieved independent nuclear capability.

At a Cabinet meeting, the chief of military intelligence, Maj. Gen. Amos Yadlin, did not say Iran already has an atomic bomb, participants said. However, he said, Iran has "crossed the threshold" and has the expertise and materials needed for one.

The participants spoke on condition of anonymity because

the Cabinet meeting was closed. They said Yadlin told them that Iran continues to accumulate uranium for enrichment and hopes to exploit the Obama administration's intention to open a dialogue as a cover for developing nuclear weapons.

Yadlin's comments follow a similar assessment by the U.S. military chief, Adm. Mike Mullen. He said a week ago that Iran has enough fissile material to build a bomb now.

Israeli officials have long identified a nuclear Iran as the most serious threat to the Jewish state. Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has

Workers toil up to 12 hours a day, sometimes seven days a week, to examine the remains. When Tijuana coffin makers fell behind during the December holidays, the morgue there crammed 200 bodies into two refrigerators made to hold 80.

"There are times here when there are so many people, so many cadavers, that we can't keep up," says the Tijuana morgue director, Federico Ortiz.

In Ciudad Juarez, the border city with the most killings, Molina prepares to make a dead man talk. Investigators press each finger of the headless body on a pad for fingerprints.

repeatedly called for destruction of Israel, and Iran has tested long-range missiles that could strike Israel.

Israel's long-held policy is that the world must cooperate to defuse the Iranian nuclear threat. While not directly threatening to take out Iran's nuclear facilities, Israel has avoided taking the military option off the table.

Prime Minister-designate Benjamin Netanyahu, who is putting together the next Israeli government, for years has said that Iran represents an existential threat to the Jewish state. He is seen as more likely than other Israeli leaders to order an attack.

Overdrive

2009 Nissan Cube:
The cube is no squareBY DAN NEIL
LOS ANGELES TIMES

The science of aerodynamics tells us that air is a fluid with its own viscosity and inertia. When an object such as an automobile moves through it, the object is enveloped in a thin layer known as a "laminar flow."

Where the laminar airflow shears away from the surface, it quickly degrades into a chaos of disordered air, or turbulence, which results in energy-sapping drag. The longer and smoother a surface—the more it approximates a perfect teardrop shape—the more aerodynamically efficient an object will be.

Designing a car involves hundreds of hours of wind-tunnel analysis as engineers, making sometimes extraordinarily fine submillimeter adjustments, chase down excess drag, wind noise and lift. The process is tedious but there is a certain beauty to it, as the car's exterior is gradually brought into harmony with the reifying, God-given properties of nature.

And then there's the air-hating box of ugly, the 2009 Nissan Cube.

The Cube is to aerodynamics what a collapsing bridge is to Olympic diving, what slipping on an icy sidewalk is to "Swan Lake," what poached dirt on toast is to a gourmet breakfast. It's a travesty, a mockery, a baleful parody of auto aerodynamics. Nissan Motor Co. says the design was inspired by a "bulldog in sunglasses." My question: Which end is wearing the sunglasses?

Of course, it's not supposed to be

beautiful, if by "beautiful" you mean sleek, lean, porpoiselike. That's a very old school, geezerly car aesthetic that simply doesn't resonate with a lot of young people. For "echo boomers" and "millennials" born from 1980 to 1990, beautiful is counterintuitively clumsy, affectedly unsleek, modular and angular, as in Wii consoles, iPhones and the large, squarish heads of the Jonas Brothers. It's no accident that Nissan has tagged the Cube its "mobile device."

To bring you up to speed a bit: The Cube is a huge hit for Nissan in Japan, and now—given a projected upswing in the small crossover segment in the U.S.—the company has homologated it for the North American market. Built on Nissan's B-platform chassis (used in the Versa and Sentra), the Cube is powered by a 1.8-liter, 122-horsepower four cylinder; offers a choice of automatic or six-speed manual transmission, and is nicely equipped for \$13,990, including stability control.

Why is stability control important? Because the Cube is aimed at relatively inexperienced drivers, those 18 to 25 years old. I would never let my new driver on the road without stability control. Seriously.

What's fascinating to me is the psychographic opportunity Nissan thinks it has identified. The reasoning is that many of the intended buyers—or drivers—will still be living at home with

one or both parents.

Nissan proposes the Cube as their home away from home, their own loungelike space to hang out with friends, decorate as they please and generally establish a base camp on the road to adulthood.

Though I am several decades beyond the target audience, I get it. The Cube's interior—the faraway windshield, the nearly vertical windshield pillars, the open seating, the airy cabin and towering headroom—is more studio loft than economy car. For a car only 156.7 inches in length, over a wheelbase of 99.6 inches, the Cube is Alice's looking glass of unexpected vastness. There are trays and flat surfaces carved into the doors and dash, places to throw stuff. There's a kind of flower-box divot built



The 2009 Nissan Cube wasn't built for aerodynamics. But it's a competently quick, comfortable ride that drives effortlessly and has good, solid brakes.
LOS ANGELES TIMES

NUTS & BOLTS

BASE PRICE

\$13,990

PRICE AS TESTED

\$16,790

POWERTRAIN

1.8-liter, 16-valve DOHC in-line four-cylinder with variable valve timing; continuously variable automatic transmission; front-wheel drive

HORSEPOWER

122 horsepower at 5,200 rpm

TORQUE

127 pound-feet at 4,800 rpm

CURB WEIGHT

2,850 pounds (est.)

WHEELBASE

99.6 inches

OVERALL LENGTH

156.7 inches

EPA fuel economy

22 miles per gallon city, 30 mpg highway (est.)

FINAL THOUGHTS

Better than Mom's basement

Cargo space with the rear seat down is a very utilitarian 56 cubic feet. Meanwhile, the smoked-out rear passenger and back windows provide a serious amount of privacy. Uh-oh.

To be sure, the Cube has some conspicuous design grace notes. You will appreciate the rock-in-a-pond ripple motif in the cup holders, speakers and, most notably, the headliner. Also notable is the side-hinged rear hatch and the asymmetric wraparound rear window. All very cool.

The previous champion of boxiness, the Scion xB, demonstrated that—as youth-oriented and Japan-chic as these square vehicles are—older consumers liked them too. Nissan expects the demand for the Cube to be bimodal, which is to say, consisting primarily of customers in the 20- to 29-year-old range and their parents, 45 to 59 years old. If Dad is making the payments, is Junior going to deny him the keys?

How does the Cube drive?

It's OK. It doesn't invite reckless abandon, that's for sure, but you wouldn't want it to. The model I drove, an SL with the continuously variable transmission (automatic), was competently quick and effortless to drive, with solid brakes, comfortable ride and very tight turning radius, making it super easy to park. But again, evaluating a car like this on its performance is like judging Israeli model Bar Refaeli on her knowledge of trade policy.

With a little more money, kids can step up to the Krom package (pronounced "chrome"), with 16-inch alloy wheels, a thumping six-speaker stereo with iPod interface, tastier upholstery and interior lighting. At less than \$20,000, the Cube Krom seems like a genuinely decent value.

With high style and an even higher coefficient of drag, the Cube seems to have what it takes to captivate the living-in-the-parents'-basement set. How far it will reach beyond that demographic, I'm not sure. It sure is boxy.

Raccoons for everybody.



LOS ANGELES TIMES

The 2009 Nissan Cube features a ripple motif in the headliner as well as the cup holders and speakers.

over the dash and bungee straps built into the doors to hold things such as pens, iPods, sandals ... what-evrr.

You might think all the headroom would go to waste—I could wear a large raccoon on my head while driving, no problem. What I found is that with the open space, people in the back can comfortably carry on a conversation with the people in the front without feeling like they are breathing down their necks. So the car is uniquely social, which is how the kids like their media too.

Life & Style

By GENE WEINGARTEN
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

Fatal distraction

The defendant was an immense man, well over 300 pounds, but in the gravity of his sorrow and shame he seemed larger still. He hunched forward in the sturdy wooden armchair that barely contained him, sobbing softly into tissue after tissue, a leg bouncing nervously under the table. In the first pew of spectators sat his wife, looking stricken, absently twisting her wedding band. The room was a sepulcher. Witnesses spoke softly of events so painful that many lost their composure. When a hospital emergency room nurse described how the defendant had behaved after the police first brought him in, she wept. He was virtually catatonic, she remembered, his eyes shut tight, rocking back and forth, locked away in some unfathomable private torment. He would not speak at all for the longest time, not until the nurse sank down beside him and held his hand. It was only then that the patient began to open up, and what he said was that he didn't want any sedation, that he didn't deserve a respite from pain, that he wanted to feel it all, and then to die.

The charge in the courtroom was manslaughter, brought by the Commonwealth of Virginia. No significant facts were in dispute. Miles Harrison, 49, was an amiable person, a diligent businessman and a doting, conscientious father until the day last summer—beset by problems at work, making call after call on his cellphone—he forgot to drop his son, Chase, at day care. The toddler slowly sweltered to death, strapped into a car seat for nearly nine hours in an office parking lot in Herndon in the blistering heat of July.

It was an inexplicable, inexcusable mistake, but was it a crime? That was the question for a judge to decide.

At one point, during a recess, Harrison rose unsteadily to his feet, turned to leave the courtroom and saw, as if for the first time, that there were people witnessing his disgrace. The big man's eyes lowered. He swayed a little until someone steadied him, and then he gasped out in a keening falsetto: "My poor baby!"

A group of middle-schoolers filed into the room for a scheduled class trip to the courthouse. The teacher clearly hadn't expected this; within a few minutes, the wide-eyed kids were hustled back out.

The trial would last three days. Sitting through it, side by side in the rear of the courtroom, were two women who had traveled hours to get there. Unlike almost everyone else on the spectator benches, they were not relatives or co-workers or close friends of the accused.



In Purcellville, Va., Miles Harrison holds a toy that belonged to his son, Chase, who died after being left in the back seat of his father's car last summer.

"... the lower portion of the body was red to red-purple..."

As the most excruciating of the evidence came out, from the medical examiner, the women in the back drew closer together, leaning in to each other.

"... a green discoloration of the abdomen ... autolysis of the organs ... what we call skin slippage ... the core body temperature reaches 108 degrees when death ensues."

Mary—the older, shorter one—trembled. Lyn—the younger, taller one with the long, strawberry-blond hair—gathered her in, one arm around the shoulder, the other across their bodies, holding hands.

When the trial ended, Lyn Balfour and Mary Parks left quietly, drawing no attention to themselves. They hadn't wanted to be there, but they'd felt a

duty, both to the defendant and, in a much more complicated way, to themselves.

It was unusual, to say the least: three people together in one place, sharing the same heartbreaking history. All three had accidentally killed their babies in the identical, incomprehensible, modern way.

"Death by hyperthermia" is the official designation. When it happens to young children, the facts are often the same: An otherwise loving and attentive parent one day gets busy, or distracted, or upset, or confused by a change in his or her daily routine, and just ... forgets a child is in the car. It happens that way somewhere in the United States 15 to 25 times a year, parceled out through the spring, summer and early fall. The season is almost upon us.

Two decades ago, this was relatively rare. But in the early 1990s, car-safety experts declared that passenger-side front airbags could kill children, and they recommended that child seats be moved to the back of the car; then, for even more safety for the very young, that the baby seats be pivoted to face the rear. If few foresaw the tragic consequence of the lessened visibility of the child ... well, who can blame them? What kind of person forgets a baby?

The wealthy do, it turns out. And the poor, and the middle class. Parents of all ages and ethnicities do it. Mothers are just as likely to do it as fathers. It happens to the chronically absent-minded and to the fanatically organized, to the college-educated and to the marginally literate. In the last 10 years, it

has happened to a dentist. A postal clerk. A social worker. A police officer. An accountant. A soldier. A paralegal. An electrician. A Protestant clergyman. A rabbinical student. A nurse. A construction worker. An assistant principal. It happened to a mental health counselor, a college professor and a pizza chef. It happened to a pediatrician. It happened to a rocket scientist.

Last year it happened three times in one day, the worst day so far in the worst year so far in a phenomenon that gives no sign of abating.

The facts in each case differ a little, but always there is the terrible moment when the parent realizes what he or she has done, often through a phone call from a spouse or caregiver. This is followed by a frantic sprint to the car. What awaits there is the worst thing in the world.

Each instance has its own macabre signature. One father had parked his car next to the grounds of a county fair; as he discovered his son's body, a calliope tootled merrily beside him. Another man, wanting to end things quickly, tried to wrestle a gun from a police office at the scene. Several people—including Mary Parks of Blacksburg, Va.—have driven from their workplace to the day-care center to pick up the child they'd thought they'd dropped off, never noticing the corpse in the back seat.

Then there is the Chattanooga, Tenn., business executive who must live with this: His motion-detector car alarm went off, three separate times, out there in the broiling sun. But when he looked out, he couldn't see anyone tampering with the car. So he remotely deactivated the alarm and went calmly back to work.

There may be no act of human failing that more fundamentally challenges our society's views about crime, punishment, justice and mercy. According to statistics compiled by a national children's safety advocacy group, in about 40 percent of cases authorities examine the evidence, determine that the child's death was a terrible accident—a mistake of memory that delivers a lifelong sentence of guilt far greater than any a judge or jury could mete out—and file no charges. In the other 60 percent of the cases, parsing essentially identical facts and applying them to essentially identical laws, authorities decide that the negligence was so great and the injury so grievous that it must be called a felony, and it must be aggressively pursued.

As it happens, just five days before Miles Harrison forgot his toddler son in the parking lot of the Herndon corporate-relocation business where he worked, a similar event had occurred a few hundred miles southeast. After a long shift at work, a

Portsmouth, Va., sanitation department electrician named Andrew Culpepper picked up his toddler son from his parents, drove home, went into the house and then fell asleep, forgetting he'd had the boy in the car, leaving him to bake to death outside his home.

Harrison was charged with a crime. Culpepper was not. In each case, the decision fell to one person.

With Harrison, it was Ray Morrogh, the Fairfax commonwealth's attorney. In an interview a few days after he brought the charge of involuntary manslaughter, Morrogh explained why.

"There is a lot to be said for reaffirming people's obligations to protect their children," he said. "When you have children, you have responsibilities. I am very strong in the defense of children's safety."

Morrogh has two kids himself, ages 12 and 14. He was asked if he could imagine this ever having happened to him. The question seemed to take him aback. He went on to another subject, and then, 10 minutes later, made up his mind:

"I have to say no, it couldn't have happened to me. I am a watchful father."

In Portsmouth, the decision not to charge Culpepper, 40, was made by Commonwealth's Attorney Earle Mobley. As tragic as the child's death was, Mobley says, a police investigation showed that there was no crime because there was no intent; Culpepper wasn't callously gambling with the child's life—he had forgotten the child was there.

"The easy thing in a case like this is to dump it on a jury, but that is not the right thing to do," Mobley says. A prosecutor's responsibility, he says, is to achieve justice, not to settle some sort of score.

"I'm not pretty sure I made the right decision," he says. "I'm positive I made the right decision."

There may be no clear right or wrong in deciding how to handle cases such as these; in each case, a public servant is trying to do his best with a Solomonic dilemma. But public servants are also human beings, and they will inevitably bring to their judgment the full weight of that complicated fact.

"You know, it's interesting we're talking today," Mobley says.

He has five children. Today, he says, is the birthday of his sixth.

"She died of leukemia in 1993. She was almost 3."

Mobley pauses. He doesn't want to create the wrong impression.

He made the decision on the law, he says, "but I also have some idea what it feels like,

Continued on Next Page

what it does to you, when you lose a child.”

So, after his son's death, Andrew Culpepper was sent home to try to live the remainder of his life with what he had done. After his son's death, Miles Harrison was charged with a felony. His mug shot was in the newspapers and on TV, with the haunted, hunted, naked-eyed look these parents always have, up against the wall. He hired an expensive lawyer. Over months, both sides developed their cases. Witnesses were assembled and interviewed. Efforts at a plea bargain failed. The trial began.

The court heard how Harrison and his wife had been a late-40s childless couple desperately wanting to become parents, and how they'd made three visits to Moscow, setting out each time on a grueling 10-hour railroad trip to the Russian hinterlands to find and adopt their 18-month-old son from an orphanage bed he'd seldom been allowed to leave. Harrison's next-door neighbor testified how she'd watched the new father giddily frolic on the lawn with his son. Harrison's sister testified how she had worked with her brother and sister-in-law for weeks to find the ideal day-care situation for the boy, who would need special attention to recover from the effects of his painfully austere beginnings.

From the witness stand, Harrison's mother defiantly declared that Miles had been a fine son and a perfect, loving father. Distraught but composed, Harrison's wife, Carol, described the phone call that her husband had made to her right after he'd discovered what he'd done, the phone call she'd fielded on a bus coming home from work. It was, she said, unintelligible screaming.

In the end, Fairfax County Circuit Court Judge R. Terence Ney found Miles Harrison not guilty. There was no crime, he said, citing the identical legal reasons Earle Mobley had cited for not charging Andrew Culpepper in the first place.

At the verdict, Harrison gasped, sobbed, then tried to stand, but the man had nothing left. His legs buckled, and he crashed pathetically to his knees.

So, if it's not manslaughter, what is it? An accident?

“No, that's an imperfect word.”

This is Mark Warschauer, an internationally acclaimed expert in language learning and technology, professor of education at the University of California at Irvine.

“The word ‘accident’ makes it sound like it can't be prevented,” Warschauer says, “but ‘incident’ makes it sound trivial. And it is not trivial.”

Warschauer is a Fulbright scholar, specializing in the use of laptops to spread literacy to children. In the summer of

2003, he returned to his office from lunch to find a crowd surrounding a car in the parking lot. Police had smashed the window open with a crowbar. Only as he got closer did Warschauer realize it was his car. That was his first clue that he'd forgotten to drop his 10-month-old son, Mikey, at day care that morning. Mikey was dead.

Warschauer wasn't charged with a crime, but for months afterward he contemplated suicide. Gradually, he says, the urge subsided, if not the grief and guilt.

“We lack a term for what this is,” Warschauer says. And also, he says, we need an understanding of why it happens to the people it happens to.

It's mid-October. Lyn Balfour

took her dog to an emergency vet clinic, then caring for Bryce, who was cranky with a cold. Because the baby was also tired, he uncharacteristically dozed in the car, so he made no noise. Because Balfour was planning to bring Bryce's usual car seat to the fire station to be professionally installed, Bryce was positioned in a different car seat that day, not behind the passenger but behind the driver, and was thus not visible in the rear-view mirror. Because the family's second car was on loan to a relative, Balfour drove her husband to work that day, meaning the diaper bag was in the back, not on the passenger seat, as usual, where she could see it. Because of a phone conversation with a young relative in trouble, and another with her boss about a crisis at work, Balfour spent most of the trip on her cell, stressed, solving other people's problems. Because the babysitter had a new phone, it didn't yet contain Balfour's office phone number, only her cell number, meaning that when the sitter phoned to wonder why Balfour hadn't dropped Bryce off that morning, it rang unheard in Balfour's pocketbook.

On the day Balfour forgot Bryce in the car, she had been up much of the night, first babysitting for a friend who had to

fragile. None of those descriptions exactly fits Lyn Balfour, a 37-year-old Army reservist who has served in combat zones and who seems to remain—at least on the subject of the death of her son—in battle.

“I don't feel I need to forgive myself,” she says plainly, “because what I did was not intentional.”

Balfour is tall and stands taller, moving with a purposeful, swinging stride. She's got a weak chin but a strong mouth that she uses without much editing. She's funny and brassy and in your face, the sort of person you either like or don't like, right away.

It had been Balfour's idea to go to the trial of Miles Harrison, and it was she who walked up to

juggling a dozen things at once. She won a Bronze Star for managing \$47 million in projects without mislaying a penny. She got married, had a son, divorced, met Jarrett Balfour and within a month decided this handsome, younger man would be her husband. Eighteen months later, he was in Iraq, is their second. Today, in the same way, they're trying for a third.

Balfour has stopped at the fertility clinic for her procedure, and she's now driving to the JAG school, to demonstrate where and how her son's death happened. Down the road to the right is where she dropped Jarrett off at work, which was not customary, and which she theorizes put a subconscious check mark in her brain: Delivery made. Now she's pointing out the house of the babysitter she'd driven obliviously past as she talked to her boss about a scheduling snafu and to her nephew about helping to pay his gambling debts. And here is the parking lot of the JAG school, on the University of Virginia campus. She's pulling into the same spot she was parked in that day, the place where Bryce died.

“It was like this, except these two spots next to us were empty,” she notes blandly as she gets out of the car, gathers her keys and leans in to get the diaper bag.

There is an almost pugna-cious matter-of-factness about Lyn Balfour that can seem disconcerting, particularly if you have a preconception about how a person in her circumstances is supposed to face the world.

You might expect, for example, that she has gotten another car. But this black Honda Pilot with the pink Tinkerbelle steering wheel cover is the same car Bryce died in, just inches from where Balfour is bending over

Braiden to unstrap him.

“It didn't make financial sense to get a new car,” she says.

Balfour's eyes are impassive. Her attitude is clear:

You got a problem with that?

Not all cases of infant hyperthermia in cars are like the ones this article is about: simple if bewildering lapses of memory by an otherwise apparently good parent. In other types of cases, there is a history of prior neglect, or evidence of substance abuse. Sometimes, the parent knowingly left the child in the car, despite the obvious peril. In one particularly egregious instance, a mother used her locked car as an inexpensive substitute for day care. When hyperthermia deaths are treated as crimes, these are the ones that tend to result in prison sentences.

Cases like Lyn Balfour's, when prosecuted, typically end in some sort of compromise: a plea to a reduced charge, sometimes with probation and a suspended sentence, sometimes with community service. Going all the way to trial is a relative rarity.

What happened to Balfour was even rarer. She was charged not with manslaughter, but with second-degree murder, carrying a possible prison sentence of up to 40 years. And as a condition of remaining free on bond, the court prohibited her from being alone with any minors, including her own teen-age son.

So Balfour hired John Zwering, a top-gun criminal defense lawyer from Alexandria, Va. That meant that Jarrett Balfour, an employee of a civilian military contractor, had no choice but to take an assignment in Iraq. The extra combat pay would be needed for legal expenses. Lyn Balfour would have to face this alone.

That is when she began to move past grief and guilt and paralyzing self-doubt to a very specific, very focused anger.

To be continued tomorrow

“Death by hyperthermia” is the official designation. When it happens to young children, the facts are often the same: An otherwise loving and attentive parent one day gets busy, or distracted, or upset, or confused by a change in his or her daily routine, and just... forgets...that a child is in the car.

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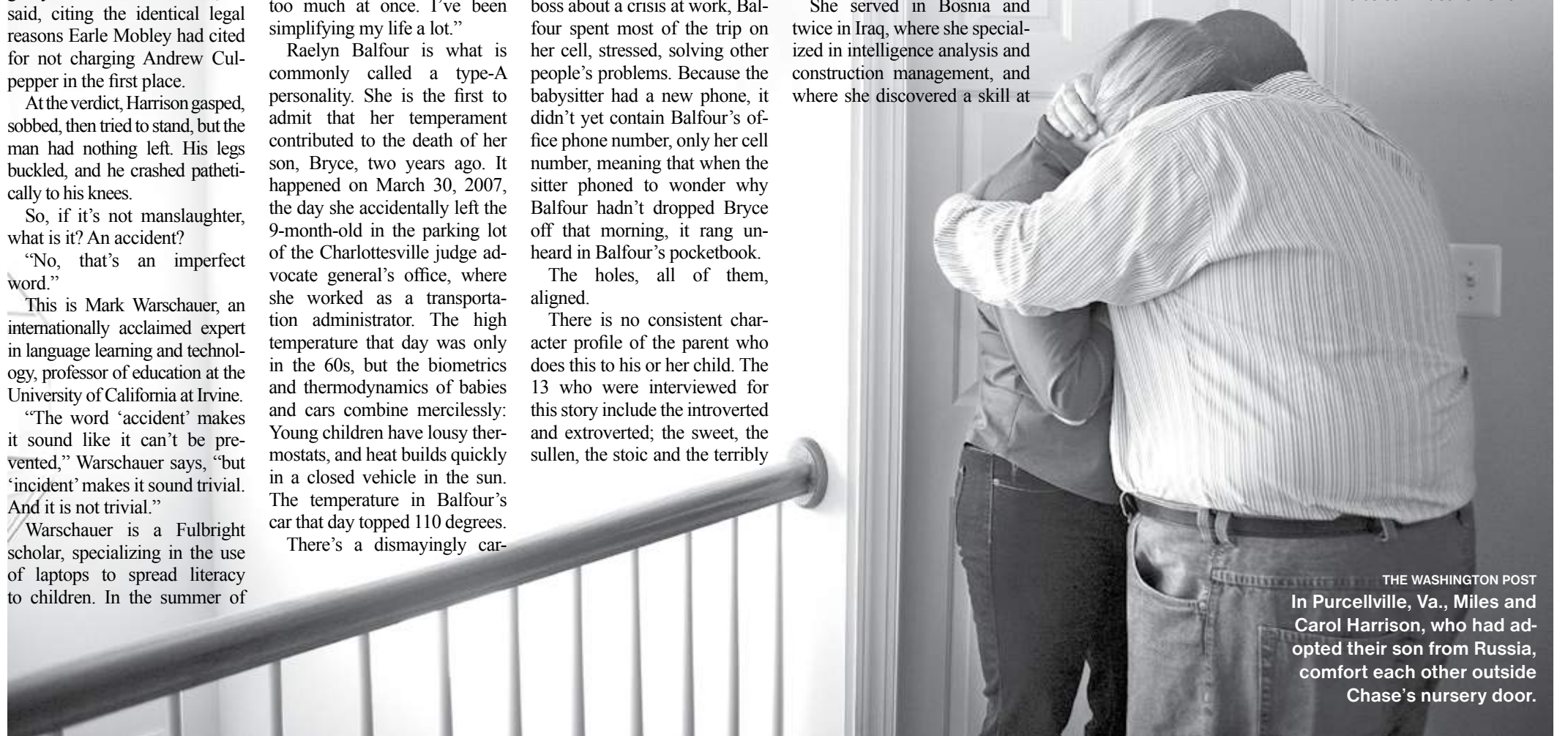
The holes, all of them, aligned.

There is no consistent character profile of the parent who does this to his or her child. The 13 who were interviewed for this story include the introverted and extroverted; the sweet, the sullen, the stoic and the terribly

Harrison in the hallway during a break, pushed past a crowd and threw her arms around his neck, pulling him close. For almost a full minute, she whispered in his ear. His eyes grew wider, and then he sobbed into her shoulder like a baby. What she had told him was who she was and that she knows he'd been a good, loving father, and he must not be ashamed.

Balfour grew up medium-poor in Michigan. There was a man she'd been told was her father and a close family friend who, she later learned, was actually her father. Her two sets of grandparents wound up divorcing each other, then switching partners. There was alcoholism, divorce, a battle for custody. When Balfour turned 18, she was ready for the discipline of the Army.

She served in Bosnia and twice in Iraq, where she specialized in intelligence analysis and construction management, and where she discovered a skill at



THE WASHINGTON POST
In Purcellville, Va., Miles and Carol Harrison, who had adopted their son from Russia, comfort each other outside Chase's nursery door.

'Watchmen' conquers box office with \$55.7 million

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Watchmen" clocked in with \$55.7 million in ticket sales to claim the top spot at the box office, making director Zack Snyder's comic book adaptation about a team of twisted superheros the biggest opening of 2009 so far.

Still, it was not quite as big as the \$70 million take of Snyder's "300" in 2007.

Dan Fellman, head of distribution for "Watchmen" studio Warner Bros., said it was unfair to compare the two films.

"They're two different movies," Fellman said Sunday. "This is a movie that runs two hours and 45 minutes. That really only leaves the exhibitor with one showing a night. If you have an 8 o'clock show, the next show is at midnight. So with essentially one show a night, I think this is outstanding."

1. "Watchmen," \$55.7 million.
2. "Tyler Perry's Madea Goes to Jail," \$8.8 million
3. "Taken," \$7.5 million.
4. "Slumdog Millionaire," \$6.9 million.
5. "Paul Blart: Mall Cop," \$4.1 million.
6. "He's Just Not That Into You," \$4 million.
7. "Coraline," \$3.3 million.
8. "Confessions of a Shopaholic," \$3.1 million.
9. "Jonas Brothers: The 3D Concert Experience," \$2.8 million.
10. "Fired Up," \$2.6 million.

Fans of the subversive comic book series by writer Alan Moore and illustrator Dave Gibbons waited years for Snyder's big-screen version. The anticipation was complicated last year when Warner Bros. and 20th Century Fox fought over who owned rights to the \$125 mil-

lion film. The studios eventually settled in January, keeping the March 6 opening intact.

Many "Watchmen" enthusiasts raced to IMAX theaters to see the exploits of Dr. Manhattan and company on the bigger screens. Greg Foster, chairman and president of IMAX Filmed Entertainment, said the movie sold out on all 124 IMAX screens it was playing on during the weekend and was the second largest opening in company history behind another superhero film, 2008's "The Dark Knight."

With no other new releases to compete against, "Watchmen" easily bumped off "Tyler Perry's Madea Goes to Jail," which had held the top spot the two previous weekends. The Lionsgate comedy took in \$8.8 million, good for second place, according to studio estimates Sunday. 20th Century Fox's "Taken," starring



"Watchmen" director Zack Snyder, fourth from right, poses with cast members, left to right, Billy Crudup, Jackie Earle Haley, Danny Woodburn, Carla Gugino, Patrick Wilson, Malin Akerman and Jeffrey Dean Morgan at the premiere of the film in Los Angeles, Monday, March 2, 2009.

Liam Neeson, took the No. 3 position with \$7.5 million.

For the year, movie attendance continues to soar, with revenue at \$1.9 billion, up 16 percent through the same point in 2008. Even factoring in 2009's higher ticket prices, movie attendance is running 14 percent higher than last year. Disney's "Jonas

Brothers: The 3D Concert Experience" dropped from No. 2 to No. 9 at the box office.

"There have been some casualties this year," said Paul Dergarabedian, president of box office tracker Media By Numbers. "Not every film can be a hit—even during this box-office bonanza we're having right now.

It dropped about 78 percent the second weekend. It's a young audience. The ones that wanted to see the Jonas Brothers came out last weekend."

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Media By Numbers LLC. Final figures will be released Monday.

Pop culture sings an 'American Idol' tune

LOS ANGELES (AP)—In 2001, Simon Cowell figured a singing contest snapped up by British TV would be an easy sell in America. Instead, network responses ranged from lukewarm to hostile.

"I was thrown out in one pitch meeting. After 30 seconds, the guy told me to get out," recalled Cowell, making the rounds with entertainment mogul Simon Fuller.

"The main thing we were being told was music doesn't work on TV in prime-time. We tried to explain that there's lot more than music on the show."

So much for Hollywood acumen: The international "Idol" empire founded by Fuller has made a hit TV show seem an obvious, even puny ambition as Idolmania has swept across the pop culture realm.

The talent contest has "created this whole zeitgeist, and it's really about Americans and participating in creating a celebrity of their own," said media analyst Shari Ann Brill of Carat USA.

Kelly Clarkson, Carrie Underwood and Jennifer Hudson are among the singers rewarded with instant careers in music, movies and in theater. A chorus of enterprises has gotten a dusting of "Idol" magic as well, from Dreyer's ice cream (Cookies N Dreamz among the novelty flavors) to a Disney World attraction to the "Karaoke Revolution Presents American Idol" video game. A deal with iTunes for exclusive show video and song downloads last season coincided with Apple's emergence as the nation's leading music retailer.

There's even altruistic value in the franchise: The charity initiative Idol Gives Back raised \$64

million in 2008 for groups including Children's Health Fund and Malaria No More.

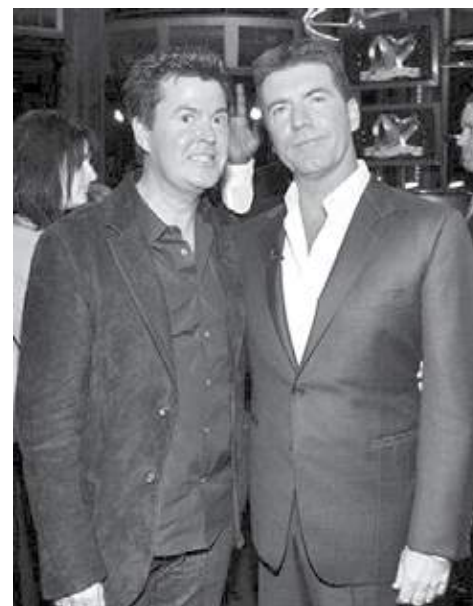
Fuller, who started it all with Britain's "Pop Idol" and carried the concept to the United States and more than 35 TV markets worldwide, told The Times of London that "pure, simple television is not that interesting for me; what's far more interesting is trying to create a cult effect."

It's been a lucrative exercise for Fuller and others. His 19 Entertainment, a division of CKX Inc., last week reported an operating profit of \$92.5 million, a 37 percent increase over 2008's \$67.4 million. Fuller's net worth in 2008 reportedly approached \$1 billion.

FremantleMedia, which teams with 19 Entertainment in producing the U.S. version, exporting the format and licensing, is another winner. FremantleMedia North America CEO Cecile Frot-Coutaz is an executive producer of "American Idol."

For Fox, which gave "American Idol" a modest summertime 2002 try-out at the urging of Rupert Murdoch, whose News Corp. owns the network, the show is a money machine. A 30-second commercial on "Idol" costs around \$500,000 and rises to more than \$600,000 for the finale, said Ray Dundas, an analyst for ad-buying firm Initiative. By comparison, he said, other top 10 shows, such as "Grey's Anatomy," get closer to \$240,000 per half-minute ad.

The difference reflects both the size of the "Idol" audience and the fact that it can deliver the elusive young adult viewers preferred by advertisers, Dundas said.



In this April 6, 2008 file photo, Simon Fuller, left, and Simon Cowell pose together at the "Idol Gives Back" fundraising special of "American Idol" in Los Angeles.

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Watchmen

Friday 4:00 7:05 10:15
 Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:05 10:15
 Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:05
 Mon and Tues 4:00 7:05

Malin Akerman, Billy Crudup
 Action, Adventure • Rated R

Synopsis

In the 1950s, a seemingly ordinary guy puts on a mask and a superhero costume and starts to fight crime. He is joined by a bunch of others who take up the same pursuit, until a law is passed that forces them to hang up their capes. When a few of the former crimefighters are mysteriously murdered, the remaining members set out to solve the crimes.



Slumdog Millionaire

Friday 4:20 7:00 9:45
 Saturday 1:05 4:20 7:05 9:45
 Sunday 1:05 4:20 7:00
 Mon and Tues 4:20 7:00

Dev Patel, Anil Kapoor
 Comedy, Drama • Rated R

Synopsis

Today is the biggest day in Jamal Malik's life. A penniless, eighteen year-old orphan from the slums of Mumbai, he's one question away from winning a staggering 20 million rupees on India's "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?" But when the show breaks for the night, suddenly, he is arrested on suspicion of cheating. After all, how could an uneducated street kid possibly know so much?



Love Me Again

Friday 4:25 7:20 9:50
 Saturday 1:30 4:25 7:20 9:50
 Sunday 1:30 4:25 7:20
 Mon and Tues 4:25 7:20

Piolo Pascual, Angel Locsin
 Love, Romance, Drama • Rated PG

Synopsis

Arah (Angel Locsin) dreams of a better life—different from the life she knows in Bukidnon. Ranches everywhere are dosing one by one. The glory her hometown once knew was slowly disappearing in favour of life abroad, particularly in Australia. Arah believes this too. Australia will save them from poverty. But Migo (Piolo Pascual) does not share this belief. He believes that Bukidnon's glory will return if only people didn't leave. Migo is Arah's first love.



The Uninvited

Friday 4:05 7:25 9:35
 Saturday 1:20 4:05 7:25 9:35
 Sunday 1:20 4:05 7:25
 Mon and Tues 4:05 7:25

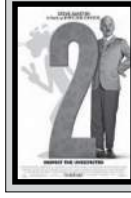
Elizabeth Banks, David Strathairn
 Horror, Remake • Rated PG 13



Push

Friday 4:15 7:30 9:40
 Saturday 1:10 4:15 7:30 9:40
 Sunday 1:10 4:15 7:30
 Mon and Tues 4:15 7:30

Chris Evans, Dakota Fanning
 Thriller Supernatural • Rated PG 13



Pink Panther 2

Friday 4:10 7:10 9:30
 Saturday 1:15 4:10 7:10 9:30
 Sunday 1:15 4:10 7:10
 Mon and Tues 4:10 7:10

Steve Martin, Andy Garcia
 Comedy, Mystery • Rated PG



Taken

Friday 4:30 7:15 9:55
 Saturday 1:25 4:30 7:15 9:55
 Sunday 1:25 4:30 7:15
 Mon and Tues 4:30 7:15

Liam Neeson, Maggie Grace
 Action, Drama, Thriller • Rated PG 13

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Dutch police recover paintings stolen 22 years ago

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP)—Dutch police have recovered eight valuable paintings, including works by Renoir and Pissarro, 22 years after they were stolen from a gallery.

Prosecutors said in a statement three suspects have been arrested—a 45-year-old German man who lives in Dubai, his 62-year-old mother and a 66-year-old man. All three sus-

pects, whose identities were not released, were due to appear in court on Monday.

Some of the paintings, which were stolen from the Noortman gallery in the southern city of Maastricht in 1987, were badly damaged by being folded, the Dutch National Prosecutor's Office said in a statement posted on its Web site Saturday.

"An expert will establish their

value," the statement said.

The gallery could not be reached for comment Sunday.

Prosecutors said police tracked down the works after an attempt was made to sell them to the insurance company that paid out five million guilders (about euro2.3 million), for the paintings after the theft.

Prosecutors said they are investigating where the paintings

have been since their disappearance. Six were found in the southern town of Valkenburg and two more in the nearby village of Walem, where one of the suspects lives.

The works were by David Teniers, Willem van de Velde, Jan Brueghel the Younger, Eva Gonzales, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Camille Pissarro and Paul Desire Trouillebert.

Britney Spears visits sick kids in Miami hospital



In this Dec. 2, 2008 file photo, singer Britney Spears performs on ABC's "Good Morning America" show at the Big Apple Circus in New York.

MIAMI (AP)—Just hours before taking the stage, pop singer Britney Spears made a surprise visit to a group of sick children at Miami Children's Hospital.

The 27-year-old Spears posed for photos with the children on Saturday.

She's also donating \$100,000 to the Big Apple Circus Clown Care

program, which brings clowns to young hospital patients.

Spears played at the American Airlines Arena in Miami as part of her "Circus" tour.

The tour to support her hit album of the same name kicked off last week before a nearly sold-out crowd in New Orleans. Spears' last toured in 2004.

Rihanna's Barbadian father waiting for her to call home

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados (AP)—Rihanna's father is reportedly waiting for her to tell him about the alleged attack by R&B singer Chris Brown.

Ronald Fenty is the father of the Barbados native. The Barbados Nation News says Fenty is disturbed by reports of last month's altercation.

The Sunday newspaper quotes Fenty as saying, "all I have been seeing is the Internet reports. I am waiting on her to call me."

Fenty also complained that tabloids have been misquoting him.

A Los Angeles police affidavit alleges that on Feb. 8, Brown punched, bit and choked Rihanna until she nearly lost consciousness.

Brown's arrest prompted a retreat into secrecy for the singers. He has been charged with two felonies.

Rihanna, 21, is known for "Umbrella" and other hits.

Obama leads birthday salute to Ted Kennedy

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama led a Kennedy Center crowd in a performance of "Happy Birthday" Sunday night, capping a star-studded musical birthday tribute to ailing Sen. Edward M. Kennedy.

The Massachusetts Democrat was honored at the Kennedy Center at an event hosted by comedian Bill Cosby. Actresses Lauren Bacall and Bernadette Peters, singer James Taylor and conductor John Williams were among those who performed.

Toward the end of the gala, Cosby introduced Obama to loud applause from the performers and the audience. The president strode to the center of the stage and then conducted the performers in the birthday tune. Kennedy stood and delivered a thumbs-up from his balcony, where he was accompanied by first lady Michelle Obama.

The president later met Kennedy in his box as the performers sang "The Best Is Yet to Come."

Caroline Kennedy presented her uncle with her family's Profile in Courage Award, paying tribute to his efforts to reform the U.S. health care system. When reform becomes a reality, Caroline Kennedy said: "We will all have you to thank. ... We love you, Uncle Teddy."

Mourners pay tribute to radio legend Paul Harvey

CHICAGO (AP)—The son of radio legend Paul Harvey used his father's words for the eulogy Saturday at a public funeral service in Chicago, the city from which he launched his national news and commentary show.

"A great tree has fallen," said Paul Harvey Jr., quoting his father's send-off for President Franklin Roosevelt. "An empty place has opened up against the sky."

The broadcaster died Feb. 28 in Phoenix, where he had a winter home, less than year after the death of his wife of nearly 68 years, Lynne Harvey. He was 90.

Their son recalled the couple's long romance and his father's start on radio for the 200 mourners at the Fourth Presbyterian Church on the city's Magnificent Mile. When his father first applied for a job on radio, he was given a broom and told to sweep up, Harvey Jr. said.

The elder Harvey would have wanted to help mold reaction to the country's current difficulties, his son said.

Harvey's newsroom colleagues, ABC Radio Networks executives and Doug Limerick, one of two broadcasters chosen to fill Harvey's time slots, attended the service.

"You can hear his father in his words," Chicago Tribune media columnist Phil Rosenthal said of Harvey's son. "I



Paul Harvey Jr., right, son of legendary radio broadcaster Paul Harvey, is consoled by an unidentified man after a funeral service for his father at the Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago, Saturday, March 7, 2009.

think people are starting to realize what we've lost."

"It was a dignified eulogy delivered in a 'rest of the story'-type style," said Bruce DuMont, founder and president of the Museum of Broadcast Communications. "It exemplified the dignity of Paul Harvey."

Standing outside the church in overcast weather, Chicago resi-

dent and businessman Gregory Fischer said he felt compelled to attend the service because he could remember listening to Harvey as a child.

Fischer said that as an adult, he's realized that he was listening to a broadcasting trailblazer.

"He was a part of Americana," he said. "It was like he was talking directly to you."

Boss allows business meeting to become personal chat fest

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: How do you convince co-workers to stay on topic and on track in business meetings? Each week I am required to attend a mandatory meeting, and each week the people in that meeting drag in personal issues or start talking about the news.

I have tried suggesting that we stay on track and keep the meetings brief, but it's not working—especially since management is one of the worst offenders. Please respond!

ON TRACK IN LAWTON, OKLA.



Dear Abby

DEAR ON TRACK: Some companies have eliminated meetings for exactly the reason you have described and found that productivity increased. Those who schedule regular meetings keep them on track by listing the subjects to be discussed on an agenda and sticking to it. However, someone must control the meeting and ensure that the agenda is adhered to.

Because your boss is causing the problem, there is nothing you or I can do about it. If it was another employee, "someone" could suggest that the topic of conversation wasn't on the agenda and a better time for discussing it would be during a break or at lunch.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: A dear cousin let me know that she'll be coming to visit for two weeks. My problem is, she's allergic to everything and has asked me to purchase special foods for her and to board my cats for the duration of her stay.

The food and boarding fees are very expensive, and I don't earn that much. Also, my cats are my children. They won't be happy to be away from me, nor will I be happy to have them away. My cousin asked me to do these things after she informed me that she had already purchased her airline tickets. What should I do?

BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

DEAR BETWEEN: If your presumptuous "dear" cousin is "allergic to everything," then surely she must be aware that her allergies will be triggered if she is exposed not only to your cats, but also the dander that they have shed on the furniture, carpets and possibly the window treatments in your home. In other words, boarding your "children" may not be enough to prevent an allergic reaction.

For her sake and yours, before she arrives give her a list of reasonably priced, pet-free hotels and motels close by. Her health could depend on it.

P.S. Room service should be able to cater to her dietary needs.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am a 35-year-old recovering addict currently 23 months clean and sober. I have worked hard to get to where I am today.

My problem concerns my sister. She constantly brings my addiction up to other people around me. I almost feel like she's trying to make a spectacle of me. I know I'm an addict, and I am dealing with it. I work my steps, my program and my recovery every day. I have learned much about this terrible disease, and I am tired of feeling like a sideshow freak when my sister brings it up. Any suggestions on how to handle this?

RECOVERING BIG SIS

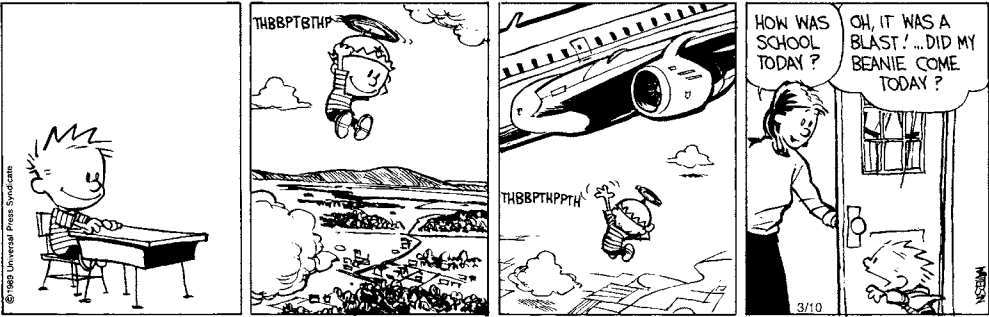
DEAR BIG SIS: First, ask your sister why she feels compelled to bring up such a private matter with others. Then explain that when she talks about it, it makes you uncomfortable, and ask her to please stop. If she doesn't comply, limit your time with her.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby - Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

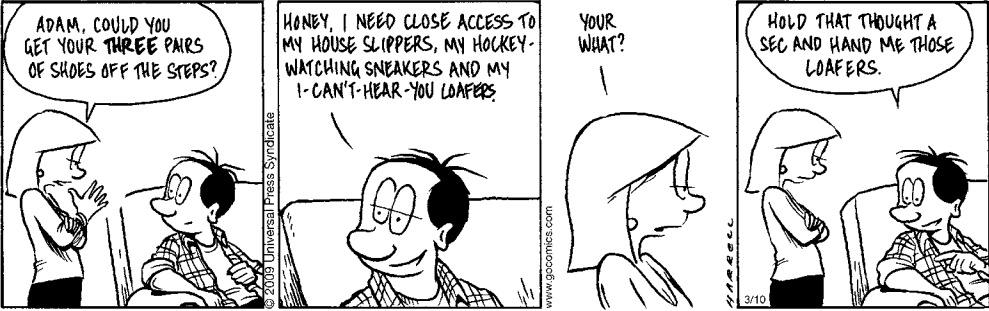
Calvin and Hobbes



Garfield®



Adam@home



The Duplex



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Coffin stand

5 Mayberry mail abbr.

8 Rams fans?

12 Run easily

13 Barcelona bravo

14 Speck

15 Ear-related

16 Resolute-ness

18 Tasks as yet undone

20 Fuzz-buster's find

21 So five minutes ago

22 Support-ing

23 Word on the street?

26 Spoke spitefully about

30 "— the ramparts ..."

31 Cowboy nickname

32 Blond shade

33 Excavat-ing machine

DOWN

1 Amor-phous

30 Sass

40 As cross as —

43 Illumi-nated

47 Setting

49 Franc-replace-ment

50 Grades K through

51 Historic time

52 Okla-homa city

53 "Yaya con —"

54 Shriner's hat

55 Mexican money

ACROSS

36 Abdomen

38 Dinner for

39 As cross as —

41 Illumi-nated

42 Behind

43 Setting

44 Franc-replace-ment

45 Grades K through

46 Historic time

47 Okla-homa city

48 "Yaya con —"

49 Shriner's hat

50 Mexican money

DOWN

22 Office trans-mission

23 Blubber

24 Meadow

25 Curved line

26 Spelling contest

27 Emeril's shout

28 Doctrine

29 Com-mand-ment

30 Posses-sive

31 Plaything

34 Some military garb

35 Difficult

36 Spasm

37 Mainte-nance

39 Bolivian city

40 Sleeping

41 Indo-nesian island

42 Rever-berate

43 Un-wanted guest, maybe

44 "Clair de —"

45 Rainbow

46 Commo-tion

48 Ump

Solution time: 21 mins.

S	T	U	D	V	I	C	O	V	A	L
L	U	K	E	E	V	E	P	E	R	U
A	B	E	T	H	E	L	L	E	N	T
W	A	S	A	B	I	L	O	R	D	L
C	E	C	A	M	A	E				
M	I	C	H	E	L	L	E	S	T	A
B	A	R	P	E	P	E	S	T	R	A
A	N	E	W	S	H	E	L	L	A	C
D	O	H	A	B	E	L				
S	T	I	R	U	P	A	W	A	K	E
N	U	T	S	H	E	L	L	M	A	L
O	B	O	E	A	I	L	A	L	S	O
B	E	R	N	R	E	S	E	E	N	

Yesterday's answer 3-10

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Shannon Miller, 32; Jasmine Guy, 45; Sharon Stone, 51; Chuck Norris, 69

Happy Birthday: You have to be ready to jump, make changes and do things differently. Your ability to adapt quickly will determine your fate. You will have the drive but the focus may be lacking. Be realistic, practical and patient in order to balance your life. Your numbers are 2, 10, 24, 26, 27, 30, 48

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Love may be up for grabs or a relationship you are in can take a turn for the best. Plan a trip that brings you in contact with someone you miss. Looking back will help you realize what you have and what you want. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Anxiety is likely to develop if you are involved in personal talks or partnership disputes. If you at least listen, you will have a better understanding of what needs to be done. You don't have to give in but you do have to find a solution. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't get too caught up in what's happening at work or with your peers. Keep things light and concentrate on your personal life. Getting involved in a creative hobby or self-improvement will bring the highest rewards. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You've got too much going for you to give in to someone's complaints. If you need to get out of the house in order to achieve peace of mind, do so. You have something good in the works and you mustn't let anyone stifle your plans. ****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't make a move unless you want to backtrack. Sit tight and wait to see what everyone else does first. Sudden changes at home or with friendships may be alarming but, in the end, you will realize that it's probably time for you to move on. **

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Look for some-

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You can't wait for others to do things—it's crucial that you do what needs to be done on your own. Put everything else on hold and focus on the most important things in your life. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You don't have to be open about what you are planning to do. Surprise everyone with your actions and your plans. A short trip to have a one-on-one conversation will pay off. *****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't give in to what everyone else thinks or wants to do. Follow your own ideas and, if that means opening up new friendships, that's what you have to do. You can't let anyone hold you back. **

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Making a residential move, changing jobs or even just doing things a little differently at home will make your life easier. Assess your situation and act accordingly. Don't wait for someone else to do it for you. ****

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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thing new to do and you will make money doing it. You are on a roll and will be able to pull things together quickly. Don't let a new acquaintance get you all worked up when you probably should be taking a pass. *****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Hard work will pay off. Someone from your past will make a difference in your life now. The lessons you've learned will keep you on the right track. Love is in the stars. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Everything appears to be up in the air. Turn this into an advantage by letting other people's uncertainties be your strength. Before you know it, you will be the one calling the shots. It's confidence that will lead to success. ***

Birthday Baby: You have a huge appetite for excitement, adventure and trying new things. You are innovative, inventive and imaginative. You are a humanitarian.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13			14			
15				16			17			
18				19			20			
			21				22			
23	24	25			26			27	28	29
30				31				32		
33			34	35			36	37		
			38				39			
40	41	42			43			44	45	46
47					48			49		
50					51			52		
53					54			55		

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

			7	6	9			
		2			1			
	3			8				
6				2				
7				1			2	3
5					6	8		4
	7							6
		1					4	
			2	4	5	9		

Difficulty Level ★★ ★

3/11

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

8	3	2	9	6	5	4	7	1
7	5	6	1	3	4	2	8	9
1	9	4	7	2	8	5	3	6
9	1	5	4	7	2	3	6	8
6	2	7	3	8	1	9	4	5
3	4	8	5	9	6	1	2	7
4	7	9	8	5	3	6	1	2
2	8	3	6	1	9	7	5	4
5	6	1	2	4	7	8	9	3

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

FUN FAMILY FUNCTIONS

Solution: 6 letters

C	H	M	E	T	R	E	H	T	E	G	O	T	E	A
P	O	E	N	M	M	Y	I	N	T	E	R	A	C	T
I	R	U	R	U	O	E	R	E	L	A	S	T	N	R
C	A	I	S	I	T	H	U	O	D	I	I	H	E	O
N	O	I	V	I	T	Q	C	I	T	V	B	E	I	P
I	C	M	V	A	N	A	T	S	I	S	L	M	T	P
C	G	N	M	A	T	I	G	T	O	T	I	E	A	U
D	I	R	B	I	O	E	I	E	C	N	N	H	P	S
K	I	O	O	N	T	E	M	E	A	L	G	E	E	P
I	N	N	S	U	S	T	N	W	O	H	S	I	V	E
D	E	U	N	J	P	N	E	S	H	A	R	E	I	E
S	V	N	N	E	O	T	S	E	S	O	L	C	S	C
H	O	S	T	C	R	K	G	A	M	E	S	G	I	H
K	L	A	T	A	L	E	E	E	L	U	N	I	T	Y
E	S	R	E	B	M	E	M	S	T	N	E	R	A	P

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Activities, Aunt, Banquet, Bond, Closest, Committee, Connect, Cousin, Dinner, Event, Games, Group, Heritage, History, Home, Host, Interact, Invite, Jokes, Kids, Location, Love, Meal, Members, Memories, Music, Parents, Patience, Picnic, Private, Share, Show, Siblings, Song, Speech, Support, Tale, Talk, Theme, Together, Traditions, Uncle, Unity, Visit

Yesterday's Answer: Save

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Saipan, MP 96950
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pro se

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

In The Matter of) FCD CN
the Petition for the) CIVIL ACTION
Change of Name of) NO. 09-0108
KAYANA MARIE)
REYES SABLAN)
A Minor Child)
By:) NOTICE
Junie C. Reyes) OF HEARING
Petitioner.)

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on March 30, 2009, at 1:30 p.m. in Courtroom 205, before Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo.

Dated this 20th day of February 2009.

BERNADITA SABLAN
Clerk of Court
/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

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WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

TUNE TUNE TUNE TUNE TUNE TUNE

Find today's solution in this section

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Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Open: Monday, March 9, 2009 Close: Friday, March 13, 2009

JVA No. 09-010 : Trades Technician (Operator)
JVA No. 09-011 : Trades Technician (Mechanic)
JVA No. 09-012 : Trades Technician (Welder)
JVA No. 09-013 : Trades Technician (Machinist)

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CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 14, 2007

Guard files sex harassment suit vs principal. PAGE 3
2 hurt in Puerto Rico vehicular crash. PAGE 5

There is still hope for nonimmigrant statu

all alien workers in the CNMI who are appealing to U.S. lawmakers to retain the provision in the federalization bills that would grant nonimmigrant status to long-term alien workers. In her message, expected to be read during today's prayer vigil at the American Memorial Park's Amphitheater, Doronah urged alien workers to "stand strong" as she vowed to continue supporting them "until the fight is won." See DORONAH on Page 4

Joins Micronee

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235- NEWS

US routs Venezuela to reach 2nd round



TORONTO (AP)—The World Baseball Classic has been a blast so far for the United States.

Kevin Youkilis hit a two-run homer, Adam Dunn and Ryan Braun added solo shots and the United States powered its way into the second round of the WBC by beating Venezuela 15-6 on Sunday night.

Chris Iannetta and Mark DeRosa each had four RBIs and Youkilis scored four times for Team USA, which broke it open with an eight-run sixth inning and finished with 16 hits.

"With that lineup, I don't see why we shouldn't have a few of those innings a night," Dunn said. "It was a lot of fun, but I don't think it was very unexpected on our side."

Every U.S. starter had at least one hit except for third baseman Chipper Jones, lifted in the sixth because of a mild strain on his side. Jones, 0-for-7 with five strikeouts in the WBC, will be evaluated again Monday.

Dunn was one of many U.S. players to rave about the chemistry and camaraderie that has quickly forged strong bonds among a team eager to make amends for a disappointing eighth-place finish at the 2006 tournament.

"It feels like we've been together for a long time," Dunn said. "I don't know if that's the way they designed it or what. It's a bunch of great guys and everyone gets along. It's amazing."

David Wright, who had three hits Sunday, said the Americans "clicked" from the first workout and have grown closer now that the competition is underway.

"It's not only a tremendous baseball experience, but also a personal experience to be around this group of guys and



Team United States' Kevin Youkilis (21) is congratulated by teammates Dustin Pedroia (15) and David Wright (4) after hitting a home run during the sixth inning against Venezuela in a World Baseball Classic game in Toronto on Sunday, March 8, 2009.

to have the fun we're having," Wright said. "On the field, in the clubhouse, it's just a blast to be a part of this."

Florida reliever Matt Lindstrom worked 1 1-3 perfect innings for the win before a crowd of 13,094.

Victor Zambrano took the loss, allowing four runs and two hits in one-plus inning.

Venezuela will play an elimination game Tuesday against the winner of Monday's game between Canada and Italy. The winner Tuesday advances to

round two, and will face the U.S. on Wednesday night to decide first place in Group C.

Team USA will begin second-round play Saturday in Miami.

Melvin Mora's RBI single gave Venezuela a 1-0 lead in the third, but the U.S. answered with two in the fourth when DeRosa's two-out triple scored Youkilis and Dunn.

Venezuela reclaimed the lead in the bottom half against right-hander Roy Oswalt on Ramon Hernandez's RBI

grounder and Gregor Blanco's run-scoring single.

The U.S. sixth began when Youkilis reached on a wild third strike. David Wright singled and Dunn walked to load the bases for DeRosa, who drove in a run with a walk. Left-hander Carlos Vasquez replaced Zambrano, but Iannetta greeted him with a three-run double to right-center, taking third as the throw went to the plate.

Vasquez struck out Curtis Granderson and was replaced by right-hander

Yoel Hernandez, who walked Derek Jeter and gave up a two-run double to Dustin Pedroia. Braun batted for Jones and grounded out, but Youkilis capped the inning with a homer to left, his second in two games.

Pedroia said Youkilis, his Boston teammate, "looks like he's got 500 at-bats under his belt."

"We had some huge hits at the right time to blow the game open," Pedroia said. "Youk is swinging the bat unbelievable right now. Hopefully we can keep it going."

Carlos Guillen hit a solo homer and Ramon Hernandez singled home Jose Lopez against right-hander Brad Ziegler in the sixth, but Dunn answered with a towering solo shot to right off Ivan Blanco in the seventh.

"I thought it was going to hit the top of the dome," Granderson said. "He crushed that ball."

DeRosa hit a sacrifice fly and Iannetta and Granderson had RBI singles as the U.S. tacked on three more in the eighth against left-hander Jan Granado.

The six Venezuelan relievers who followed starter Armando Galarraga allowed 13 runs in five innings, leaving manager Luis Sojo fuming.

"As a manager, this is what gets you really upset, because you want the guys to be aggressive," Sojo said through a translator. "You want the bullpen to execute, but that wasn't the case. After that point, everything was lost. They couldn't find the strike zone."

Oswalt allowed three runs and six hits in 3 2-3 innings, walking two and striking out one.

Galarraga allowed two runs and five hits in four innings.

Miguel Cabrera and Magglio Ordonez, Venezuela's 4-5 hitters, combined to go 0-for-9 with three strikeouts.

A-Rod to have hip surgery, miss 6-9 weeks



TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Alex Rodriguez's spring training

saga took another unexpected turn: He's headed for hip surgery Monday that will sideline him for six to nine weeks—and that's not all.

The New York Yankees slugger will need a second operation after the season, assuming he can play all the way through. Dr. Marc Philippon, who will perform the initial procedure in Colorado, said he's confident Rodriguez will be able to do that once he recovers.

"Well, it's better than him missing the whole year," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said. "It could have been a lot worse."

The decision Sunday came after Rodriguez and the Yankees spent the week mulling treatment options for his torn labrum, and it was yet another jolt to the three-time MVP during a tumultuous month in which he admitted using steroids from 2001-03 with Texas.

The arthroscopic procedure that was chosen gives Rodriguez a chance to return early this season—general manager Brian Cashman said he expects A-Rod back "sometime in May." But it also means he'll need another, more extensive operation in the fall.

Philippon said Rodriguez ultimately decided (with the team's support) to put off that surgery, which likely would have kept him out until at least July because it could require three to four months of rehabilitation.

Still, his injury not only leaves the Yankees with a huge hole at third base and in the middle of their lineup, it causes major concerns about the health of a player in the second year of a record \$275 million, 10-year contract.

A noted hip specialist with the Steadman-Hawkins Clinic, Philippon spoke to reporters from Vail, Colo., on a conference call Sunday with Cashman. Also on the call was team physician Chris Ahmad.

Philippon said he is confident in the "85-90 percent range" that Rodriguez will be able to play through the rest of the regular season after he recuperates from surgery.

"I firmly believe this approach will be successful and allow Alex to return," Philippon said. "We've had very good success with this approach. Short term, we feel the risk is very limited that he will re-tear his labrum during that six-, seven-month period."

The decision eliminates the option of Rodriguez treating the injury with rest and rehab and playing through the season without surgery. But this operation will not completely correct the hip.

"The surgery that will just repair the labrum tear right now would shorten his rehab," Cashman said. "Then, following the conclusion of the season, going in and repair the remaining aspects that need to be repaired."

Now that a treatment plan has been chosen, Cashman said Rodriguez is feeling better.

"When it first happened, he said he

was 'bummed.' That was the exact word," Cashman said. "Alex texted me and he was really positive. He is excited. This is what he wanted to do."

Rodriguez also has a cyst in his right hip that was drained Wednesday. He had additional tests Friday to test the hip's strength and flexibility.

Once he returns to the lineup, Rodriguez will likely get more days off than usual.

Cashman could not guarantee that A-Rod will be ready for the start of spring training next year following the second surgery this fall.

The Yankees have an insurance policy that will reimburse some of Rodriguez's \$32 million salary this year, a baseball official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because the team doesn't discuss insurance publicly. Typically, insurance on baseball contracts pays back a team a specified percentage of the salary of a player on the disabled list, after a period of days for a deductible.

Rodriguez's hip had been fine until he experienced stiffness during spring training this year. The injury forced the 12-time All-Star to skip the World Baseball Classic, where he was to play for the Dominican Republic.

Philippon attributed the labrum tear to the rotational stress that Rodriguez—"a very strong hitter, strong batter"—places on his hip.

"Because of all the test findings, analysis, the function of Alex, I feel it's in his best interest to have his labrum repaired,

remove part of his impingement and therefore stabilize his labrum," he said. "The goal here is to allow Alex to rehab rapidly in a safe manner."

Rodriguez will stay in Colorado for the foreseeable future.

"We'll keep Alex with us certainly for the first few weeks," said Philippon, who has treated several sports stars including golfer Greg Norman and figure skater Tara Lipinski. "The main reason being we're going to put him on the fast track so we will be very aggressive on his rehab. We'll check on Alex twice a day."

Rodriguez could swing a bat as a range-of-motion drill as soon as seven days after surgery.

"It's better news than some of the reports. It's good for him. He can get that out of the way and hopefully get back to us soon," Yankees captain Derek Jeter said at the WBC in Toronto. "We can't sit around and wait for him to come back. You've got to go out there and play. That's what good teams are about. It's more than one person."

On Thursday, Rodriguez's brother, Joe Dunand, told ESPNdeportes.com that the slugger was going to have surgery, with a projected 10-week recovery. But later that day Cashman said A-Rod would be treated conservatively in the hope of avoiding surgery.

Yankees outfielder Johnny Damon, speaking from Lakeland, where New York played the Detroit Tigers, said Rodriguez was doing the "right thing" in addressing the injury now.

"I think it's better to get it out of the way, especially since he's going to be in New York for eight more years af-

ter this year. So you might as well take care of it," Damon said.

The leading candidate within the organization to take over at third is Cody Ransom, a 33-year-old who has a .251 average and 24 RBIs in 183 at-bats over six major league seasons.

Since joining the Yankees before the 2004 season, Rodriguez has averaged 42 homers and 123 RBIs, with a .303 average.

Girardi said if the season started today, Ransom would replace Rodriguez at third.

"It's going to create something different for us, so we're going to have to take a look at some of these other guys," Girardi said. "There's still four weeks left in camp, and it opens up an opportunity for someone."

Last year, Rodriguez was sidelined from April 28 to May 20 because of a strained right quadriceps—his fifth career trip to the disabled list. An MRI exam at that time showed what Cashman called an "irregularity" in the right hip.

The labrum is cartilage that lines the hip joint. It can be torn through injury or repetitive wear and tear. When arthroscopic surgery is recommended, the doctor makes small incisions to insert specialized instruments into the joint space and either removes the torn piece of labrum or repairs the cartilage with a suture.

Dr. Kevin Plancher, a top orthopedic and sports medicine specialist in New York who trained and worked at the Steadman-Hawkins Clinic, said hip conditions such as A-Rod's are common in sports but are probably most prevalent among hockey players.

Yang gets breakthrough at Honda Classic



PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. (AP)—Y.E. Yang was first to finish at last year's Honda Classic.

This time, he finished first.

Alone in front before a harried finish, Yang shot a 2-under 68 Sunday to end up one shot ahead of John Rollins and pick up his first PGA Tour victory.

The Korean took command with three straight birdies on the front side and wouldn't fold, picking up a two-year exemption and a check for \$1,008,000. With the win, he qualified for next week's CA Championship at Doral, plus earned an invitation to next month's Masters.

Yang played last year's final round at PGA National by himself, going off first and needing only 1 hour, 53 minutes to finish.

He was there until the very end this time, pumping his fist in the air when his 50-footer for birdie stopped a foot away from the cup, sealing the victory. He finished at 9-under 271.

For a guy whose claim to fame was beating Tiger Woods at the 2006 HSBC Champions in Shanghai, it was a moment to savor.

Rollins made birdie at the par-5 18th to get within two shots of Yang, who was one hole behind and in a greenside bunker at the par-3 17th. And when Yang's 10-footer for par tailed right and stopped short, the lead—four shots earlier in the day—was down to one.

He cringed when his third shot sailed off target at the finishing hole, but coolly two-putted for the win.

"From 50 feet, it's not easy to do that to win your first golf tournament," Rollins said. "My hat's off to him."

Rollins (67) was alone in second and he, like Yang, qualified for the CA Championship by moving into the top 10 in the FedEx Cup standings. Ben Crane (68) was third after finishing 6 under and Jeff Klauk (71, with 17 pars and

one bogey) was alone in fourth, another shot back.

"All in all, I have no complaints," Rollins said. "I did all I can do. Shot 3 under on championship Sunday and came up short, but I gave myself a chance."

There were 25 players who started the final round within six shots of Yang's lead, and some made early charges.

Robert Allenby started with two birdies in his first three holes and eventually got to 7 under, but never got going on the back side and finished 4 under, tied for fifth with Will MacKenzie (70), Fredrik Jacobson (70) and Scott Piercy (65).

Just like last year, when he was in contention during the Honda's final round before chipping onto a waterside pile of rocks—and then tossing his ball into the drink—at the 15th, Mark Calcavecchia's chances were all wet again.

This time, the two-time Honda winner's undoing came at the 11th, when he hit into a greenside hazard. He rolled up his right pant leg, hacked the ball out of some muck and salvaged a bogey, but got no closer and shot 73.

Rory McIlroy—bidding to become the youngest winner in PGA Tour history—worked his way up the leaderboard as well, before con-

secutive bogeys to end his round left him tied for 13th.

"I'm pretty disappointed the way I finished," McIlroy said. "I got myself into a great position this afternoon and just let it slip."

With that, the 19-year-old turned his attention quickly to Doral. If he wins there, he'll top Johnny McDermott as the youngest tour winner ever; McDermott set the mark by winning the 1911 U.S. Open.

"If I can just keep playing the way I have been, maybe just try and give myself a few more opportunities and try and limit my bogeys, I'll hopefully have another good one next week," McIlroy said.

Davis Love III also was part of the nine-way tie for 13th, which turned out to be significant. Love should barely be No. 50 in the world rankings on Monday, which would be good enough to get him into Doral. If

he stays in the top 50 through Bay Hill, he'd be back at Augusta National as well.

Y.E. Yang, of South Korea, holds the trophy after winning the Honda Classic golf tournament in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. Sunday, March 8, 2009.

AP



Magic hold on for 86-79 win over Boston



BOSTON (AP)—

Dwight Howard scored 18 with 15 rebounds, making a pair of free throws with 13.9 seconds left to ice it after Boston cut a 22-point deficit to three, and the Orlando Magic held on to beat the Celtics 86-79 on Sunday.

Ray Allen had 17 of his 32 points in the fourth quarter, scoring nine straight to make it 82-79 with 1:22 to play. But Allen hit the back of the rim on a 3-point attempt from the left side that would have tied it with 41 seconds to play.

Rashard Lewis hit a pair of free throws to make it a two-possession game, but Eddie House missed his 3-point try and Howard iced it with his free throws.

Lewis scored 15 and Rafer Alston had 10 points and eight assists for Orlando, which won its fourth straight and moved two games behind second-place Boston in the Eastern Conference playoff race. One game after turning back Cleveland to grab the tiebreaker edge in the Eastern Conference, the Celtics offered a feeble start on their home court against third-place Orlando.

The Magic led by seven points after one and 18 after two as Boston posted its lowest-scoring first

quarter and half of the season.

Orlando led by 22 points in the third quarter before the Celtics and their fans woke up. Trailing 68-47 with 2:14 left, Leon Powe dunked to start a 9-1 run to end the quarter; Allen made it 11 of 12 points with a pair of free throws to start the fourth that cut the deficit to 69-58.

Pierce made two free throws with 9:33 left to give him 18,246 in his career and pass Hall of Famer Robert Parish for third on the Celtics' career list. Larry Bird is next, with 21,791.

Allen's 3-pointer cut it to seven points with 3:21 left, and he drove to the basket to make it 82-77 with 2:17 to play. He was fouled on a drive to the basket, and his two free throws cut Orlando's lead to three points.

But after Courtney Lee missed a foul-line jumper and Kendrick Perkins grabbed the rebound, Allen got open on the left side and missed his 3-point try. Lewis' free throws ended a 3 1/2-minute scoreless streak for Orlando.

Jazz 109, Raptors 101

At Toronto, Deron Williams had 25 points and nine assists, Mehmet Okur had 19 points and 11 rebounds, and the Utah Jazz beat the Toronto Raptors for their 11th straight win.

Kyle Korver matched a season-high with 20 points. Paul Millsap had 18 points and 11 rebounds, and Andrei Kirilenko scored 18 for the Jazz, who have won eight straight over Toronto.

Utah matched its longest winning streak since an 11-game run from April 1-18, 1999.

Chris Bosh had 30 points and 10 rebounds for the Raptors, with Andrea Bargnani scoring 20 and Jose Calderon adding 10 points and 11 assists. Anthony Parker scored 16 points, but Toronto still lost its fifth straight.

Spurs 103, Suns 98

At San Antonio, putting away the Suns with 12 points in the fourth quarter, Tony Parker notched his fourth 30-point performance in his last seven games and the Spurs sent Phoenix home 0-for-4 on its road swing. Averaging 25.6 points since the All-Star break, Parker sealed San Antonio's third win this season over the slumping Suns with a one-handed runner with 26.2 seconds left.

The Suns fell further back in the Western Conference playoff picture with about six weeks left. San Antonio, meanwhile, reinforced its No. 2 place in the West with the win. The Spurs have done so despite not having Manu Ginobili the past 11 games and a brief spell without Tim Duncan, who had 17

points and 15 rebounds against the Suns.

Going in the wrong direction is Phoenix, which fell four games behind Dallas for the final playoff spot in the West. Shaquille O'Neal was held to 14 points after averaging nearly 30 in his previous four games.

Nets 106, Knicks 101

At East Rutherford, N.J., Devin Harris had 35 points and 10 assists, and the Nets ended a frustrating stretch of close losses. Vince Carter added 25 points for the Nets, who had lost three of four, failing to pull out tight games against New Orleans, Boston and Orlando. This time they made the plays down the stretch, while the Knicks melted down amid an ugly combination of missed shots and turnovers in the final 2 1/2 minutes.

Brook Lopez's bucket inside gave New Jersey a 100-99 lead, then Harris took Larry Hughes' turnover the other way for an uncontested layup with none of the Knicks scurrying back on defense, making it a three-point game with 1:15 to go.

Harris and Bobby Simmons each added a pair of free throws in the final seconds after empty New York possessions.

David Lee had 19 points and 14 rebounds for the Knicks,

who opened a five-game trip with their fifth loss in six games. Nate Robinson scored 17 points and fellow reserve Danilo Gallinari added 15.

Rockets 93, Grizzlies 83

At Houston, Yao Ming had 24 points, 17 rebounds and three blocks and the Rockets extended their home-court winning streak to 12. Luis Scola added 18 points and 14 rebounds for the Rockets, who got an easy victory heading into a tough week that includes games against Denver, the Los Angeles Lakers and San Antonio.

Rudy Gay scored 21 points and Marc Gasol added 18 for the Grizzlies, who've lost 10 of 11 and seven of their last eight road games. O.J. Mayo, the Grizzlies' leading scorer, had only 10 points on 4-for-13 shooting after scoring 32 in Memphis' 104-93 win over Houston on Feb. 4.

Thunder 89, 76ers 74

At Oklahoma City, Nenad Krstic scored 20 points and Malik Rose added a season-high 14 as the Thunder continued their strong play without their two leading scorers.

The Thunder surged ahead by outscoring Philadelphia 20-2 to start the second quarter, and the 76ers were never able to get

within 10. Rose had eight of the Thunder's points in that stretch, while the 76ers went 1-for-9 from the field and committed six turnovers.

Andre Miller and Thaddeus Young led Philadelphia with 20 points apiece. Miller has scored at least 20 points in five straight games for the first time in his career.

Nick Collison added 12 points and 11 rebounds for Oklahoma City, which has won four of five without Kevin Durant (ankle) and three of four without Jeff Green (back).

Kings 114, Nuggets 106

At Sacramento, Calif., Kevin Martin had 26 points, seven rebounds and eight assists for the Kings, who never trailed.

It was a rare evening of excitement at Arco Arena, where the Kings have lost repeatedly and own the third-worst home record in the NBA. Sacramento ran off eight straight points to start the game, led by 12 at the half and never trailed in winning its 10th home game.

Martin connected on five 3-pointers for the Kings, who tied a season high, making 14 3-pointers. Andres Nocioni had 23 points, Spencer Hawes contributed 20 points and eight rebounds, and Francisco Garcia had 19 points.

Carmelo Anthony scored 32 points for Denver.

POI, PIC beat rivals in Budweiser softball

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

POI Aviation and Pacific Islands Club scratched out victories against separate opponents in the Budweiser Inter-Government/Business Slow-pitch Softball League Thursday night at the Capital Hill Ballpark.

Centerfielder William Sablan and shortstop Kyle Kaipat led POI to a 15-10 triumph over P&S.

With the win, POI improved its win-loss record to 8-7 but remained in ninth place in the 20-team field league.

Sablan went 4-for-4 with three runs in the bottom of the third, fourth, and sixth innings. He tripled in the fourth.

Kaipat was also perfect at bat with his 3-for-3 performance, including a two-run homerun in the first. He also doubled in the fourth on the way to another run. He had

a total of four runs batted in.

Third baseman Mabel Ngingemelas also went 3-for-3 with two runs and an RBI.

P&S failed to capitalize on a 7-3 lead in the top of the third inning as POI quickly recovered with six runs in the bottom of the third.

They tucked in three more in the fourth en route to the win after six and a half innings.

After the loss, P&S is now tied with CRM/DEQ from 10th to 11th places.

PIC 16, DLNR 10

PIC erected an 8-0 lead after three and a half innings on the way to a 16-10 upset win at the expense of Department of Lands and Natural Resources.

The victory, however, was only PIC's fourth this year after

14 games although it climbed from 17th to 15th.

DLNR stayed in 12th place with a 6-10 mark.

Pitcher Rueben Ogruil capped a six-run explosion in the top of the sixth with a two-run homerun.

He also made another run in the fifth and finished with two RBIs on a 2-for-4 stint at the plate.

Third baseman June Keuar was 4-for-4 and had four runs and a double.

Second baseman Cole Pritchard came up with three runs and an RBI, while first baseman Jesse Peredo was 3-for-3 with two runs, three doubles, and four RBIs.

Mayor's Office 4, PSS 3

In another upset decision, Mayor's Office prevailed over

Public School System, 4-3, in a defense-oriented match-up.

Mayor's Office rallied back late in the game to snatch its fourth win in 16 games and moved from 19th to 16th in a tie with Customs.

Left fielder Asap Ogomoro gave PSS a 1-0 lead on a single by John Terlaje but PIC took the driver seat with two runs in the bottom of second from outfielders Ben Tenorio and Fred Robert on a two RBI double by Joe Sablan.

Ogomoro scored another run on a double by Sim Iramk in the fourth, while Nizer Masayos reached home plate in the top of fifth as PSS took back the lead 3-2.

In the fifth, Robert Sablan drove home Ben Tenorio and Ernest Kani to complete the Mayor's Office's comeback win and dealt PSS its fifth defeat in 15 outings.

high this year and I would love to come back next year and hope for the best," said Koester.

She also recognized the efforts made by organizers Jon Cramer and Russ and Kanae Quinn.

During the awards ceremony, Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association president Laurie Peterka awarded Kanae Quinn with a certificate of recognition.

Peterka said the participants may be smaller in number compared to last year but the tournament proved that it was getting better each year.

Another U.S. pro, Jennifer Snyder, said the event this year was "awesome" and promised to come back next year.

"I have a great partner and we played well but the other teams were also very good and I have fun watching the finals," she said.

sis 20, Fitial 16, Ja. Villacrusis 14, Manibusan 13, Palacios 11, Diaz 8.

Quichocho Law Office 78 – Cadagat 37, Demapan 11, Itaas 9, Capalad 8, Moises 5, Umali 4, Tagle 2, Hugos 2.

Scoring by quarters: 23-24, 45-38, 64-62, 82-78.

Second Game

CNMI Nationals 106 – Iguel 36, Rabauliman 17, Cruz 15, Tumaquip 13, Moses 8, Chariton 8, White 5, Johnson 4.

Runnin' Rebels 95 – Tumaquip 28, Iguel 19, Teregeyo 16, Norita 11, L. Rangamar 7, Lisua 6, Kenty 4, Coldeen 4.

Scoring by quarters: 22-20, 50-45, 85-72, 106-95.

Championships in Guam.

In the 400m freestyle swim, Staal also broke his own record (4:34.13), timing in at 4:33.99. His previous mark in the 400m freestyle event was recorded on Dec. 28, 2008, during a meet in Guam.

Staal's third record swim was in the 100m breaststroke, as he clocked in at 1:15.77. Again, he eclipsed his won record (1:16.17) posted in Guam in December last year.

MIKI

From Page 28

Nara Prefecture.

Miki, who is a government employee from Osaka Prefecture, said they never played in a tournament as big as the Marianas Cup on Saipan.

"We're just playing for the fun of the game," she said.

Like last year, they were undefeated in the tournament, beating in succession the pairs of Amanda Puleo and Chelsea Reidey, 21-8; U.S. pro Jenelle Koester and Heather Kennedy, 21-12; Keiko Urata and Hiroko Matsumaya, 21-18; and Hiroyo Kaneda and Megumi Murakami, 21-17, on the way to on outright finals berth.

Gitteli, who is an Olympian, and Tonon needed five straight

wins to reach the finals opposite the Japanese women.

But their uphill battle came to an end after the three-point loss at the hands of Miko and Iwana. They settled for the second place purse of \$2,000.

The Italian women promised to come back next year. Tonon played for the third time in the Marianas Cup, while it was Gitteli's first time.

Gitteli and Tonon won their debut against Dawn Penebaker and Linda Anastacio, 21-10, but lost to Urata and Matsumaya, 18-21, that relegated them to the losers' bracket where they won their next five games before bowing out to Miki and Iwana in the finals.

In their road back, Tonon and Gitteli defeated the Korean pro Mi Hwa Sin and Milli Saiki, 15-8.

They then fashioned out a 15-10 win over Koester and Kennedy

Joe Villacrusis picked up where brother James left off in the third, as he nailed nine points in that period, which ended with Docomo still in front, 64-62.

The fourth quarter was a neck-and-neck battle until two free throws each from Joe and Fitial secured the win for Docomo.

Bonbon Cadagat almost single-handedly carried Quichocho on his shoulders, drilling a game-high 37 points. Bart Demapan was the only other Quichocho player to score in double figures with 11 points, but he had only two markers in the closely fought fourth quarter.

In the second game, the CNMI Nationals drew 36 big points from "Pistol" Pete Iguel to trip the Runnin' Rebels, 106-95.

male Student Athlete of the Month plum after leading the Lady Ayuyus to a three-peat in the MISO caging. Bennett and the Lady Ayuyus defeated Marianas High School in the finals, 56-47, to defend the girls varsity title for the third straight time.

Staal completed the February's best club after securing the Male Athlete of the Month title.

The 14-year-old swimmer earned the nod of NMASA

Iguel nailed 12 of his total points in the third quarter, which saw the Nationals increasing their lead to 13, 85-72, after outgunning the Runnin' Rebels, 35-27.

The Runnin' Rebels were still in the game at halftime, behind by only five, 45-50, when Iguel led the Nationals' breakaway in the third period.

Jose Tumaquip, Syl Teregeyo, and Jesus Iguel tried to bring the Runnin' Rebels back in the fourth quarter, but Pete Iguel, Marvin Rabauliman, and Jomary Tumaquip were there to save the day for the Nationals. Rabauliman and Tumaquip combined for 30 points.

First Game

Docomo 82 – Jo. Villacru-

members after his record-breaking performance in last month's Saipan Swim Club Heptathlon Swim Meet at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

Staal made three age group (13 to 14) marks and was the No. 1 swimmer in his age group. The Tsunami Saipan swimmer posted 56.83 seconds in the 100m freestyle swim, shattering his own mark of 57.36 seconds made on Jan. 9, 2009, at the 2009 Junior Pan Pacific



TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

x-Boston	49	15	.766	—
Philadelphia	30	31	.492	17 1/2
New Jersey	28	35	.444	20 1/2
New York	25	37	.403	23
Toronto	23	41	.359	26

Central Division

x-Cleveland	49	13	.790	—
Detroit	31	30	.508	17 1/2
Chicago	29	34	.460	20 1/2
Milwaukee	30	36	.455	21
Indiana	28	37	.431	22 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	46	16	.742	—
Atlanta	35	28	.556	11 1/2
Miami	33	29	.532	13
Charlotte	28	35	.444	18 1/2
Washington	14	49	.222	32 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	42	20	.677	—
Houston	41	23	.641	2
New Orleans	39	22	.639	2 1/2
Dallas	38	25	.603	4 1/2
Memphis	16	46	.258	26

Northwest Division

Utah	40	23	.635	—
Portland	39	23	.629	1/2
Denver	40	24	.625	1/2
Minnesota	18	44	.290	21 1/2
Oklahoma City	17	46	.270	23

Pacific Division

LA Lakers	50	12	.806	—
Phoenix	34	29	.540	16 1/2
Golden State	21	42	.333	29 1/2
LA Clippers	15	48	.238	35 1/2
Sacramento	14	49	.222	36 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Orlando 86, Boston 79
Utah 109, Toronto 101
San Antonio 103, Phoenix 98
New Jersey 106, New York 101
Houston 93, Memphis 83
New Orleans 89, Philadelphia 74
Sacramento 114, Denver 106

x-clinched playoff spot

HONDA CLASSIC SCORES

FINAL ROUND

Y.E. Yang	68	65	70	68	271
John Rollins	69	68	68	67	272
Ben Crane	70	65	71	68	274
Jeff Klauk	69	68	67	71	275
Scott Piercy	72	66	73	65	276
Robert Allenby	66	68	72	70	276
Will MacKenzie	67	67	72	70	276
Fredrik Jacobson	72	67	67	70	276
D.A. Points	69	69	74	65	277
Jason Dufner	72	66	68	71	277
Jeff Overton	67	67	70	73	277
Charlie Wi	67	73	65	72	277
Greg Owen	72	69	71	66	278
Scott Verplank	73	70	69	66	278
Davis Love III	73	69	69	67	278
Sergio Garcia	67	72	71	68	278
Rory McIlroy	70	68	71	69	278
Harrison Frazar	72	65	71	70	278
Kevin Streelman	70	68	70	70	278
Alex Cejka	71	66	70	71	278
Brett Quigley	71	67	67	73	278
Ernie Els	73	70	70	66	279
Brandt Jobe	70	70	70	69	279
Greg Chalmers	73	64	71	71	279
James Nitties	70	67	70	72	279
Mark Calcavecchia	74	67	65	73	279
John Senden	69	73	71	67	280
Spencer Levin	72	68	70	70	280

BAXTER

From Page 28

21-19 over eventual third placers Shinya Inoue and Shoji Wakiya of Japan. They also beat Jeff Carlucci and Cris Nelson, 21-19.

Baxter and Dooner took the first finals berth with their first win against the Dalhausser-Mister tandem, who pocketed \$2,500 for finishing second.

Dalhausser and Mister defeated Larry Sharry and Jazz Roscow, 21-10. The pro-am duo also prevailed against Yauso Nakaya and Bruce Berline, 21-15; and over Shigekazu Fujimatsu and Daisuke Matsumoto, 21-19.

After their loss to Baxter and Dooner, Dalhausser and Mister won against Inoue and Wakiya, 21-17, to take the second finals berth.

Wakiya was adjudged as tourney MVP and shared the third place purse of \$1,200 with Inoue.

Nelson and Carlucci took home

David Mathis	68	68	73	71	280
Michael Allen	69	71	69	71	280
John Merrick	69	69	70	72	280
Tim Herron	72	69	74	66	281
Angel Cabrera	67	75	71	68	281
George McNeill	71	72	70	68	281
Brad Adamonis	70	73	70	68	281
Steve Marino	69	70	71	71	281
Casey Wittenberg	71	72	67	71	281
Brendon Todd	74	69	66	72	281
Lucas Glover	71	70	72	69	282
Todd Hamilton	72	70	71	69	282
Briny Baird	72	69	71	70	282
Kent Jones	68	71	70	73	282
Matt Kuchar	71	70	68	73	282
Chris DiMarco	72	70	73	68	283
Brendon de Jonge	72	70	72	69	283
Scott McCarron	72	71	70	70	283
Erik Compton	69	69	73	72	283
Nick O'Hern	73	69	69	72	283
Woody Austin	70	73	67	73	283
Jeff Maggert	70	70	69	74	283
Darren Clarke	70	71	68	74	283
Chris Riley	68	75	73	68	284
Tadd Fujikawa	71	71	73	69	284
Shaun Micheal	70	71	73	70	284
Ryan Palmer	73	66	74	71	284
Brian Gay	72	69	72	71	284
Justin Leonard	70	73	70	71	284
John Mallingier	69	74	69	72	284
Stewart Cink	67	71	72	74	284
Robert Garrigus	72	70	68	74	284
Nicholas Thompson	69	71	74	71	285
Leif Olson	73	70	69	73	285
David Berganio Jr.	71	69	70	76	286
Michael Letzig	70	71	75	71	287
Johnson Wagner	71	71	74	71	287
Tim Wilkinson	71	71	73	72	287
Miguel Angel Jimenez	70	73	70	74	287
Chris Stroud	69	72	69	77	287
Boo Weekley	72	71	72	73	288
Marc Leishman	73	70	71	75	289
Bart Bryant	70	73	73	75	291
Carl Pettersson	72	69	73	77	291

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

BUDWEISER CAGING STANDINGS

CNMI Nationals	8	1
IT & E	7	3
O/Aces	6	3
Docomo	4	6
Diamond Auto Fixers	3	5
Quichocho Law Office	3	7
Runnin' Rebels	2	8

BUDWEISER SOFTBALL STANDINGS

Men		
DCCA	17	0
Freedom Air	12	3
Docomo	12	4
Beach Boys	11	3
Joeten Motor Jets	11	4
No Zone	11	5
CPA	10	3
Legislature	10	6
POI	8	7
P&S	6	8
CRM/DEQ	6	8
DLNR	6	10
PSS	5	10
CHC	4	9
PIC	4	10
Customs	4	12
Mayors	4	12
CUC	3	9
Law & Order	3	10
Hopwood	0	14

Women		
NMC	9	2
CUC	5	4
Finance	6	4
DCCA	5	7
CHC	1	9

the fourth prize bounty of \$600.

There were two teams that split the \$300 prize for fifth place. They were the duo of Dave Rillera and Saki Waka and the pair of Matsumoto and Fujimatsu.

During the awards ceremony, all the winners vowed to come back next year.

Dalhausser said it's always been a great opportunity for him to return to Saipan and join the fun.

"It's awesome. It's a big possibility to come back," said Dalhausser, who brought his Olympic gold medal and gave the other athletes the chance to see and touch it.

"I may not have the trophy but I have this real gold with me. If you want to touch it, make sure you wash your hands," he joked.

Carlucci said it has always been a unique experience for all the athletes with a chance for a vacation as well as the friendly competition.

FOUR

From Page 28

nement at the American Memorial Park tennis courts en route to ruling the boys' 14-and-under singles division.

27th Micronesian Open Windsurfing Competition

PHOTOS BY ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Six windsurfers head to the first buoy during Heat 2 of the men's open competition.



Kensuke Kaku, the youngest participant in the 27th Micronesian Open Windsurfing Competition held from Feb. 28 to March 1, nears the shores of Micro Beach.



A participant in the masters division tries to keep his balance.



Beginners division champion Kouji Kimura, center, and runner-up Saeko Sotau, left, are joined by Shigeru Tomita of tournament organizer Seawind Marine Sports.



The Top 8 placers in the masters division pose for a group photo.



A father and his two sons play near the shores of Micro Beach, while a participant in the masters open warms up for the race.



Men's open Top 3 placers show their prizes. Joining them is awards banquet host Shigeru Tomita of Seawind Marine Sports.



Women's division champion Mayumi Ikeda, right, and runner-up Yasuko Hayakawa.



A participant checks his sail and board before the race.



Two participants in the men's open pass the second buoy.



US routs Venezuela to reach 2nd round

The World Baseball Classic has been a blast so far for the United States.

24

Saipan Tribune Sports

Yang gets breakthrough at Honda Classic

Y.E. Yang was first to finish at last year's Honda Classic. This time, he finished first.



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28 TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2009

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Baxter, Dooner rule Marianas Cup

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

American pro Paul Baxter became the first player to win the men's division crown three years in a row after ruling the 17th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival with amateur partner Hugo Dooner last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club.

Baxter and Dooner defeated the tandem of Olympic gold medalist Phil Dalhausser and Tyce Mister, 21-15, in the finals.

It was the second time Baxter and Dooner defeated Dalhausser and Mister in the tournament. They also prevailed in the winners' bracket, 21-19.

"Some people can elevate their game," Baxter said when asked if he was ever intimidated by 6'9" Dalhausser's presence in the tournament.

Baxter said the event is getting stronger each year and promised to come back next year.

"There were really good teams this year. Me and Hugo just met this week and we have lots of fun and learned a lot," Baxter.

Dooner won his second title following his triumph 15 years ago when he partnered with Mister in the 1994 edition.



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

U.S. pro Paul Baxter's spike fails to cross the net against the outstretched arms of Japanese pro Yasuo Nakaya during the exhibition game of the 17th Marianas Cup last Friday at the Pacific Islands Club sand court.

"I want to come back next year and hopefully play alongside Paul. But it will depend on the draw," said the 39-year-old San Diego, California native who works at HSBC.

Dooner plays beach volleyball

with friends purely for fun back home.

He said he's at a different level whenever he plays on Saipan.

Baxter and

Dooner, who split the \$4,000 top purse, were undefeated in five straight games in two days. They started their victory run with a 21-4 win against Peter Valdez and Dan Westphal, then

See BAXTER on Page 26



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Paul Baxter, left, and Hugo Dooner raise their champions trophies and the \$4,000 cash prize during the awards ceremony that concluded the 17th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Tournament last Sunday night at the sports grill of the Pacific Islands Club Saipan.

Miki, Iwana repeat as women's champs

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

The amateur tandem of Yoko Miki and Chie Iwana repeated as women's division champion of the 17th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival after turning back the Italian duo of Daniela Gitteli and Federica Tonon last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club.

"I'm happy. It's great to be here and play again," said Miki, who was named tournament MVP following their 21-18 finals win. She and Iwana went home with the \$3,800 prize.

"We have a great teamwork. We will use the money to pay for our plane ticket for next year," said Iwana, a mother of one who lives in

See MIKI on Page 26

Docomo, Nationals outgun foes

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Docomo and the CNMI Nationals found more firepower in their arsenals en route to downing separate foes in the 2008-2009 BANMI/Budweiser Basketball League Friday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Docomo had five players tallying double figures in scoring, allowing the Hoopa-

holics to beat Quichocho Law Office, 82-78.

It was Docomo's second straight win after losing four straight games. The

See DOCOMO on Page 26

The CNMI Nationals' Quincy Johnson drives against Quichocho Law Office's Larry Palero during their game in the Budweiser caging this month at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. The Nationals and Quichocho had mixed fortunes in Friday's games with the former winning over the Runnin' Rebels and the latter bowing to Docomo.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Four named February top athletes

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Two tennis players, a cagebelle, and a swimmer were voted top athletes for February during the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association monthly meeting last Thursday at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Lydia Tan was named Female Athlete of the Month for her title win in the mixed doubles 4.0 division of the 2009 Shirley's Open Tennis Tournament in Guam last month. Tan teamed up with Peter Loyola

and they won over Guam's Sam and Katie Lai in the finals, 7-5, 6-4.

The two Saipan netters had a straight sets victory over the

tandem of Ian Batherson and Amber Gadsden, 6-3, 6-4, in the first round. In the second round, Tan and Loyola cruised to a similar 6-3, 6-4 triumph against Shinzo Nakamura and Katsura Nishizawa to advance to the semifinals.

In the semis, the Tan-Loyola duo duelled Ray Miranda and Toni Evaristo, and the Saipan

won convincingly, 6-2, 6-1, to set a title showdown with the father-and-daughter tandem of Sam and Katie Lai.

Tan also played in the women's doubles 35-and-above division and in the women's 4.0 singles.

Another tennis player in Rafael Jones made the top athletes list for February when the junior netter was selected Male Student Athlete of the Month. He went undefeated in the 2009 Coconut Classic Tennis Tour-

See FOUR on Page 26



Tan



Jones



Bennett



Staal